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TOM LOFTIN JOHNSON

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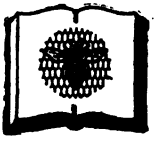
TOM L. JOHNSON

MAYOR OF CLEVELAND

BY

CARL LORENZ



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THE A. S. BARNES COMPANY
1911

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INTRODUCTORY

THE life of Tom L. Johnson contains the elements of an ancient Greek tragedy. It is intensely human, a great psychological drama. Its outward activities belong to our days and to the future, its inner workings were those of a multiplex nature difficult to comprehend, and misunderstood by most of us. He was never vanquished by his enemies, but fell a victim to himself.

Partisan hatred and partisan friendship obscured not only the real man, but also his aims and his work. As a politician he made of his enemies a pack of wolves, of his friends a herd of sheep. He himself was a good hater and a good friend. His methods staggered the class of men among which he was counted, but to which he never belonged, and delighted the common people, of whom he was one in his democratic way. Yet, he was

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not without aloofness. He bubbled over with a selfish joy of living, and of fighting for the betterment of political and social conditions. Standing with both feet in the present, the past had little meaning for him. His penetration into the future was marvellous. Fear of men he knew not, and he was at home at the house of the great as well as in the hut of the humblest. His courage of his convictions was above suspicion, but not so his love for veracity. Truth, half-truth and untruth were sometimes matters of expediency with him, as with most politicians, and even with statesmen. Yet he was very quick to resent a doubt in his word, which rather proves the assertion. He took a delight in domination over men, and it was an honest delight, well founded upon his superior intellect and his great will power. There was something of the daring speculator in him and of the gambler who can lose a stake with a smile.

He entered public life after having made a large fortune, with the firm resolution to

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devote the rest of his days to the welfare of the people. Full of new ideas, he soon met with the active and passive opposition of the men who were satisfied with the existing order of things. His great political battles, his dogged fight against the street railway monopoly, his attacks upon privileged classes of all kinds, his exertions in behalf of municipal reforms, his utter disregard of conventionalities, made him a most picturesque figure in public affairs.

Ten years ago he announced the programme of our politicians of to-day and was derided as a Socialist. His keen foresight perceived the possibilities of an awakening of the people to a new era of sociological activity. Salvation he believed must come from the cities and their people. Nothing could be expected from the rich. He knew the "system" from personal experience and attacked it. The ballot box was his weapon. His brilliant mind was capable of grasping any question, yet time proved that he lacked the qualities of the really strong to achieve

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great success. He lost himself in an eddy and was swallowed, his heart's work unfinished, almost undone. Here was an example of the self-made man falling short of achievement of the results of his opportunities.

At the height of his career he was mentioned as a presidential possibility, and there is little doubt that he cherished the same hopes as his friends. He was never lacking in self-confidence. At that time the speculator awakened in him. He became a political plunger—and lost. The incident, after all, was of minor importance, measured by his life-work and the aims of his programme. If the latter were dictated by political ambition, personal failure was inevitable, but the result of the work remains—and cannot be brushed aside.

Pathetic in the extreme was his final defeat, his family misfortunes, his sickness, and his heroic fight with incurable disease. "I do not like to be an ex," he said, when obliged to step down and out, and the words were characteristic of the whole man.

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TOM L. JOHNSON

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TOM L. JOHNSON

I

THE TIME OF YOUTH

TOM LOFTIN JOHNSON, to give his full name, was born on July 18, 1854, at Blue Spring, Kentucky. He was a descendant of a distinguished Southern family. A few years after the birth of the boy, his father, Albert W. Johnson, established himself as a cotton planter in Arkansas. During the Civil War he served as a colonel in the Confederate army. His wife, with her three boys, Tom L., William L., and Albert L., followed his war fortunes, and when peace was declared they found themselves stranded at Staunton, Va. The war had devoured their plantation and all their other worldly possessions. Little Tom L., at that time

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eleven years old, became the mainstay of his parents and brothers. Being befriended by a railway conductor he managed to obtain from him a monopoly on selling newspapers. No one but Tom was allowed by the man to carry papers on his train to Staunton. As there was a great demand for them, the boy had his own way in charging high prices, and he improved upon his opportunity. In a little over a month he was able to give his father $88.00 in silver money. Col. Johnson was thereby enabled to take his family to Louisville, Ky., where friends enabled him to return to his plantation. Another failure must be recorded, followed by still more financial troubles and wanderings of the family from one place to another.

Of this period of Tom L. Johnson's life we have a record written by Mr. Louis F. Post, an editor, who was an intimate friend of his and possessed of his confidence. Mr. Post wrote among other things:

"Col. Johnson was extremely poor at this time. His family was deprived not only

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of comforts, but of necessaries. They were so poor that when Mrs. Johnson determined to look for employment for Tom with a relative in Louisville, she was obliged to wait for a cold day to give her an excuse for wearing the crocheted hood of her more comfortable days. The intervening time had been utilised in providing for the education of the children. At Evansville, Indiana, Tom attended school for the first time. He received one full year's schooling there, and a few months' more while he lived upon his Uncle Jillson's farm. At Evansville he went through three grades, and what with this and the instruction he had received from his mother, he was about ready to enter high school when the family moved back to Kentucky. But his mother continued to tutor him, and in this she was assisted by his father, who, like his father before him, was skilful in mathematics and fond of astronomy. Tom cared nothing for literary studies. He was strongly inclined to neglect them altogether. But mathematics became easy to

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him. Like both his grandfather and his father, his mind seemed to work almost instinctively in mathematical processes. In very great measure his power and his success are attributable to this aptitude, which he possesses in an exceptional degree."

It must not be surmised that the extreme poverty of the family dampened the ardor of little Tom, who was a lively boy and very apt to look at the bright side of things. Mr. Johnson in later days took pleasure in telling a little incident of his childhood days: He and one of his cousins played one day with a Noah's ark, when someone came into the room and accidentally knocked nearly all the animals over. The other child began to cry, but little Tom said, "Look here, some of them are still standing."

"Somehow or other," Mayor Tom added to this story, "I never felt like giving up a thing if there was a shadow of a chance to begin all over again."

In February, 1869, the boy began to work in a rolling mill in Louisville, where he re-

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mained for four months. At the end of this time Biederman du Pont, a connection of the Johnsons by marriage, offered Tom a place in his street railway office in Louisville, Ky., and the offer was accepted. Thus Tom L. Johnson, in later years famous as a street railway magnate, entered upon the career in which he made a great fortune.

It was a small road, Tom was a small boy, only fifteen years old, but it did not take him long to learn. Toward the end of the year he was secretary of the company. He became also an inventor and constructed a new fare box, which was an improvement upon those in use. This invention netted him about $30,000 and made it possible for him to buy a street railway of his own in Indianapolis. He had also a good friend in Mr. Biederman du Pont, who advanced him a large sum of money in addition to his own resources. Tom made his father president of the road, which he improved and made profitable, and ran it until he came to Cleveland in 1880, with a half million dollars in

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his pocket, and still a greater sum of business experience and street railway knowledge in his head.

He had sold out his interest in the Indianapolis venture, because his friends and associates had lacked the courage to replace the mules then in use to move the cars by electricity. Not wishing to antagonise them he had looked for another field of activity.

Under the light of to-day there is no doubt that this move of his was not only best from a financial standpoint, but it developed in him all his great energy and intellectual faculties. Cleveland became in the course of time the battlefield of his life and finally his Waterloo.

From the very beginning of his career in Cleveland he encountered endless strife. At the time of his arrival he had to meet the antagonism of the roads already established. He was the man equal to the task, young, vigorous, full of experience and expediency. His opponents, of whom the late Senator Marcus A. Hanna was the most re-

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doubtable one, had as little rest as Johnson. Mr. Johnson gave his opponents no peace. The chamber of the City Council and the court rooms were the sites of their contests. Hanna and his associates were bitterly opposed to Mr. Johnson's innovation of through lines and transfers. They preferred to take a second fare from a passenger who was obliged to use two different lines. The new man was successful in his enterprise, though Hanna bought a controlling interest in the company upon which Johnson directed his main attack. He fought their privileges, without being adverse to secure some for himself. Hanna, too, was a force like Johnson, but slower in his movements. He made a peace offer before going on the warpath, but the pipe of peace was declined. Tom L. Johnson had an advantage over his adversary, as he was on the more populous East Side of the river and could therefore develop his road under better conditions than Hanna, whose interests were in West Side lines. Johnson also succeeded in uniting

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some of the other companies, forming the Cleveland Electric Railway Company, popularly known as the "Big Consolidated." He was now in control of some of the best lines in the city. Hanna, on his side, bought the cable lines, forming the Cleveland City Railway Company, then dubbed the "Little Consolidated."

The result of the long fight was advantageous to the people, as it ended in a material reduction of fares, Johnson justly figuring that this would induce people to make a more frequent use of the cars, and increase the income of his road. The other side never could comprehend these mathematics, but was forced to yield.

Peace between the two companies was not a genuine one, and as other interests claimed Mr. Johnson by this time, he finally sold his holdings in the Cleveland Electric Railway Company and left town. Some years later Hanna united his company with the "Big Consolidated," against which Johnson, later

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on, having become Mayor of Cleveland, waged a war of unheard-of bitterness.

At the time Johnson retired from his Cleveland railway he had with his brother Albert acquired an interest in the Detroit street car system and also in that of Brooklyn, N. Y. He was soon engaged in the same kind of warfare as in Cleveland, but still found time to start large steel plants in Johnstown, Pa., and in Lorain, Ohio, and to make useful inventions in connection with the production of steel rails. His capacity for work knew no limits. In 1898, however, he withdrew more or less from the street car business, and soon afterward from the steel plants also. Things of another nature had taken possession of his mind and occupied part of his time.

His success as a business man was remarkable. From a boy on he showed a faculty for making money and was daring in his enterprises. Difficulties spurred him on to stronger action. He liked to measure his

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strength with worthy adversaries, and delighted in debates with his business associates at the directors' table. Yet, strange as it may seem, this vivacious, smiling and well-liked street railroad magnate incurred the distrust of many of his friends in the business world. He had such a way of "putting things" that his word was not considered as good as his signature. This fact is significant and often, later on, influenced his public career.

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II

IN POLITICS

THAT a man of Tom L. Johnson's characteristics should take an interest in public affairs is but natural. His eyes were wide open. He was dealing with public corporations and public men. His enemies accused him of having bought city councils, in times when such proceedings were the rule and not the exception, and credited him with great cleverness. It must be said that he denied the truth of these accusations with emphasis, and that his later career was an antithesis to such assertions. He was past thirty years of age when he began to give attention to political problems, and entered into them with the fervency of his nature.

The story as to how he became interested in the subject was told by himself. He had been engaged in amassing a fortune, in mak-

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ing money—in short, in "doing the other fellow." He had "had no use for politics," and had paid no attention to them. But on a day about the year 1885, when he was travelling between Cleveland and Indianapolis, a train boy offered him a book entitled "Social Problems." Johnson supposed the book to be a work on the social evil and refused to buy it. The conductor, who heard his refusal, happened to know the book as the second work of Henry George, the first being "Progress and Poverty." He told Mr. Johnson that he labored under a misapprehension and that the book would, no doubt, interest him. Finally Johnson bought it with some reluctance, for cash in those days was not plentiful with him. He was often obliged to scheme in order to procure a cheap railroad ticket. Reading the book, he was completely captured by it and bought also "Progress and Poverty."

The contents of these works were a revelation to him. He felt like Joshua marching into a new land, and seeing new things.

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Heretofore he had devoted himself to his business only and had never been much of a reader. His attorney in Cleveland at that time was L. A. Russell, an outspoken, fearless and eccentric man, but withal a thinker. With him Mr. Johnson debated over the theories of Henry George. The lawyer recognised the masterly arguments of Mr. George, but objected to the premises. Johnson convinced him that they were sound and converted him to his views and to those of the author of the books.

The next step Mr. Johnson undertook was to make the personal acquaintance of Henry George, and a warm friendship sprang up between the two men. In the year 1886 Johnson had gone to New York, where, with a small number of other gentlemen, he became one of the promoters of the single tax movement.

He was promptly swallowed up in the political turmoil of the Gotham of those days. His friend Henry George became the leader of a labor movement against Tammany Hall

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and Abram Hewitt. Johnson contributed to the campaign fund and repeated the contribution a year later, when Henry George became the candidate for Secretary of State of the United Labor party. In this campaign Mr. Johnson took a more active part and began to acquire a taste for politics. His friend advised him to enter public life, to further the single tax movement. Johnson was willing and made his maiden speech in Cooper Union, New York, at the beginning of the year 1888.

It was thought advisable by Henry George that Tom L. Johnson enter Congress as a free trader of the Cobden pattern, and Tom L. Johnson returned to Cleveland, and became the Democratic candidate in a very strongly Republican district, the 21st of Ohio. He was defeated, but not discouraged, for two years later he again entered the same arena.

His Republican adversary was again Theodore E. Burton, now United States Senator from Ohio. Burton challenged him to a de-

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bate, to his consternation, for Johnson at that time had but little experience in the art of speaking, while Burton was recognised as a master of the word. Johnson, nevertheless, accepted promptly on condition that the debaters take turn in arguments of ten minutes each, until the hour for closing. David slew Goliath, who consumed his ten minutes in preambles and never got to the meat of the pot.

Tom Johnson was elected to Congress by a majority of 3,000 votes. As a legislator he developed his greatest activity, worked for single tax legislation, tax reform and other things, new to the minds of those days. His success was small in a way, but his agitation was educating public opinion. In the year 1892 Mr. Johnson was re-elected and succeeded during his second term in causing Henry George's work on "Protection or Free Trade" to be printed in the Congressional record. In this manner over a million copies of the book were distributed throughout the land at public expense. He expected a

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tariff revision, and was greatly disappointed when President Cleveland deferred consideration of the question.

On August 13, 1894, Mr. Johnson made his first great speech in Congress. It was against the Wilson tariff and full of aggressiveness. He attacked the amendments made by the Senate and adjured the Lower House not to descend to the level of the Upper House. In another speech on the same floor he spoke with the same directness for a flexible currency bill of his own and against a national bank bill. It was his last speech of any magnitude in Congress, for in the following election the people repudiated the Democrats, and Johnson was defeated by Burton.

From now on until Mr. Johnson became Mayor of Cleveland his energies were devoted to propagating the teachings of Henry George, to his street railway fight in Detroit, and his private affairs. He also took part in the mayoralty campaign of New York in

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the year 1897, when his friend Henry George was a conspicuous candidate for mayor.

The unexpected death of Henry George, shortly before election, put an end to his political activity in New York. In 1899, having made the acquaintance of Governor Pingree of Michigan on the strength of his public utilities teachings, he went to Detroit. In conjunction with the Governor he began a street railway campaign, with the intention of bringing the street car system under public ownership, to reduce the fare, or make a free railway, taxing the adjacent land values for the expenses.

The necessary legislation for the purchase of the railroad by the City of Detroit was passed, and the bill was signed by the Governor. The city employed Professor Edward W. Bemis of Chicago, who had been forced out of the faculty of the University of Chicago, on account of his (more or less) socialistic tendencies. The Professor was employed to ascertain the value of the road.

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Prospects for the plan were promising, but took a different turn when the Supreme Court of Michigan declared the municipal ownership law to be unconstitutional. The large business interests had acted. Johnson and his friend, the Governor, then resorted to the expedient of securing an ordinance from the city council of Detroit, by which a holding company was to run the railroad for the city. Governor Pingree was placed at the head of the company, which was to buy the system. Again the business men interfered, claiming that the purchase price of $16,000,000 was exorbitant. Johnson was loudly accused of trying to bleed the city. The negotiations were broken off, the Council frightened, and in this state of mind, reconsidered the ordinance and let it die. Once more Mr. Johnson found it expedient to sell out his interest in a street railway company. It was said that he lost nothing by the transaction. His fortune was estimated at from three to four million dollars at that time.

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Mr. Johnson was now in the prime of life, full of vigor and health, and active of brain. His experience had been wide and varied, yet he had not seen much of the world. A hurried voyage to Europe, business trips to some parts of the United States, or a swift political expedition to this or that city, completed his travelling experience. He had not the patience to study and observe foreign nations and their methods and thereby to broaden his knowledge and his mind. The desire to be doing something himself made him an inattentive observer, though he was very quick in perceiving. From a daring business man and occasional speculator in the stock market he had developed into a politician, preacher of new theories, and advocate of the people's rights.

He was ever ready to place his teachings in practice, to help the common people, to attack their enemies, and to march at the head of the army.

He was a born leader; he liked to rule and

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to win, as his adversaries readily believed, in good faith. Such was the man when he became the "best mayor of the best governed city in the United States," as his friend Lincoln Steffens wrote in July, 1905.

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III

IN THE MAYOR'S CHAIR

UNTIL the year 1895 the affairs of the rapidly-growing City of Cleveland were administered by honorable gentlemen and citizens, who had much dignity, but little energy and push. In the office of the Mayor stood a beautifully-carved walnut buffet with a decanter and a box of cigars. Visitors were welcome and humored by a drink, a smoke or a funny story, or two. The Mayor was a representative officer and understood his functions. The City's business was transacted at board meetings and by the City Council, not to say by certain street railroad officials, who were the godfathers of "the boys." John and George were good fellows, avoided scandal and saw to it that contracts and franchises were of the proper kind and given into the right hands. Some-

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times the bidders who were "left," "raised a howl," but such is the nature of the bitten. Cleveland was no worse than other cities of the land and was more beautiful than most of them. The citizens themselves were satisfied to let things go their way, after they had done their duty on election day by voting their respective party tickets. But it happened one day during the administration of Mayor Robert E. Blee, 1893–1895, that the Street Railway Company desired a new franchise. Nothing was more natural for a street railway company, and Mayor and Council seemed willing to comply with the request.

One of the Councilmen at that time was a young lawyer by the name of Robert E. McKisson. He was a Republican and a fighter, ambitious and vigorous. "Curley-headed Bob" they used to call him. This youngster was possessed of the idea that opposition led to success. He therefore opposed all and everything, and as the administration was of the opposite party he made no mistake from a political standpoint. In April, 1895, he

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was elected Mayor in spite of John H. Farley, who managed the Blee campaign, and who was an old and tried politician, and had himself occupied the Mayor's chair in his younger days.

With the advent of McKisson the old and slow methods were brushed aside. The vigor of youth was infused into the affairs of the city. The young Mayor wanted to do things. As long as he confined his energies to paving streets, building sewers or planning water tunnels he met with little opposition. Soon, however, he antagonised the steam railroads and the Street Railway Company, and also Mark Hanna.

Politics had played a strange part in McKisson's election. The Mayor belonged to the Foraker faction and had refused the assistance of Hanna, who had been for some time the "deus ex machina" of the Republican party in Cleveland. McKisson's election had, therefore, been a blow to Hanna. Mr. Hanna remained silent as long as the young man did not interfere with his busi-

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ness interests. A renewal of street railway franchises was asked for, and McKisson demanded a reduction in fares. The war was on, but neither side gained much of an advantage. The quarrel was carried into the Legislature.

In the meantime another municipal election approached. The old Hanna guard made an effort, but the younger element won the day, and McKisson was re-elected. During his second term the Mayor lost himself more and more in the political turmoil, and was promptly charged with levying political assessments not strictly in accordance with custom.

Mark Hanna, the maker of a President, wished to become United States Senator, and McKisson had the temerity to oppose him. The history of that campaign is known. Hanna won by one vote. McKisson returned to Cleveland, resolved to seek a third term as Mayor of Cleveland. But now Senator Hanna had developed a personal grudge

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against McKisson, and directed all his batteries against his political enemy.

There could be but one result, the defeat of the Mayor. The bitterest pang for McKisson in this defeat was that John H. Farley became his successor, the man whom he had attacked in and out of season, while he was a member of the City Council. Farley, although a Democrat, had the assistance of Mark Hanna. He was a strong man, rugged, self-reliant, fearless and defying. A Democrat of the old school, he reached into the new and fleeting time. He was not in sympathy with the ultra modern views upon city governments. His slogan was economy, and they accused him of trying to "save the city from progress." During his term the street railway question came up again. He wished it settled upon the same basis as of old. The people cried "treason," and an early day form of insurgency arose like an angry sea. The Mayor stood his ground, a fearless fighter, resolved not to yield, and depending

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upon what he termed the "horse sense of the community."

It was a delusion. The people were not with him. They wanted a new solution to an old problem. Most painful was the spectacle that presented itself in the City Hall. The politicians around the Mayor, men whose career he had made, forsook him like rats leaving a sinking ship. Even his directors could be seen stealing into the camp of his enemies. John H. Farley stood alone, reading the handwriting on the wall. Nothing more was to be done, not even the risking of a second campaign. With his private secretary, W. C. Sage, he stepped down and out. A few weeks later he went to his northern island in Georgian Bay, where he soon forgot the vicissitudes of political strife.

His successor was Tom L. Johnson. During the winter of 1900–1901 the political situation in Cleveland had taken an aspect that was alluring to Mr. Johnson. Farley had taken an untenable position on the street railway question and was surrounded by men

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in whom he could not fully trust, and who had little personal liking for him. One of these men was Charles P. Salen, City Auditor on the strength of a political arrangement.

Mr. Salen, though still a young man, had managed Tom L. Johnson's former campaigns and was a past grand master in that game of politics which never rises to statesmanship. He kept his friend well posted on the state of affairs in Cleveland, and at the opportune moment the people were informed that the Democratic patriots were making great efforts to induce Mr. Johnson to come to the rescue of the City. Johnson, who had always maintained his right to vote in Cleveland, was persuaded to become a candidate for Mayor. An unknown man of dark complexion paid his campaign assessment, out of admiration and friendship for Mr. Johnson. Such was the statement given to the newspapers. The name of this mysterious personage was never revealed, but the story was told by one Joe Goldsoll, now de-

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ceased. It was significant of the Johnson method.

With the arrival of Mr. Johnson, the campaign became immediately highly interesting. His political enemies knew their man and did not underestimate his strength. They heaped insult after insult upon him, decried his sincerity, doubted his right to citizenship in Cleveland, referred to him as a charlatan and a humbug.

He answered with the declaration that he had sold out his business interests, and that it was his avowed intention to devote the rest of his life to the welfare of the people and the promotion of honesty and purity in public affairs.

He kept his promise in his own way. His was not the simple nature of "Golden Rule" Jones of Toledo. He was a man of the world, erring from selfishness, but well meaning. It was not his intention to forgive his enemies, but to subdue them. Whatever he did, he did not because of a great love for his fellow men, but because he was ambitious

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to stand above the common politician of the day. He aimed at great things and was sincere in his fight for the people. Yet, his animus might have been revenge, not love, or a moral longing for the right.

The intensity with which he entered into the street railway controversy, and his tenacity of purpose in this "Seven Years War," were partly born of personal hatred. But all in all he was serving a noble purpose, conceived with enthusiasm, and announced with a flourish of trumpets.

It was but natural that many people distrusted his words, that they refused to see in him a modern Messiah. But only the poor in spirit failed to recognise his superiority. Among the intelligent men he had numbers of admirers, even among the rich who were his opponents from selfish reasons. The partisan asses need not be mentioned.

At the time Tom L. Johnson made his second entry into Cleveland, the City Council was wrangling over a proffered renewal of the existing street railway franchises, which

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were to expire several years later. There was danger of a new franchise being granted for twenty-five years under conditions unfavorable to the people. Johnson with characteristic impetuosity worked up a sentiment of opposition to the grant among the people. He even circulated anti-franchise petitions and paid his solicitors two cents a name. He was accused of bribing the voters. His answer to that accusation was that it is better to buy up the people than to sell the people's council.

The Democratic primaries took place on the 19th of February, and Tom L. Johnson was nominated for Mayor. On April 1st he was elected by a plurality of 6,033 votes. His platform was considered a radical one, and he himself did not deny that he took an advanced stand in political matters, especially in advocating the single tax. Home rule, local option on taxation, municipal ownership as far as possible, a street car fare of no more than three cents, equalisation of

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taxes, and just appraisement were his other demands.

Excepting for his single-tax theory there was really nothing radical in his declaration of principles, considered from the standpoint of the ordinary citizen. The politicians, of course, found much to denounce in them. They even opposed a reduction of car fares, arguing that poor service would be the result. John and George laughed in their sleeves, for they well knew that the service would always be as poor as possible, even at a fare of ten cents. It could not be worse than it was, at the lower fare. To-day, after nine years, it is just as good or as bad as it ever was, and we have had both high and low fares. Nobody can object to home rule or just taxation, even if municipal ownership has its censors.

The main argument put forth against municipal ownership was an expression of fear that it might create an invincible political machine. There never was a politician

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stronger than the people, the great destroyers of politicians, political machines, kingdoms and empires. Tom L. Johnson himself was a living example of this. According to his enemies he had the strongest political machine ever seen in Cleveland. Yet the people got rid of him as soon as they became tired of him.

Of greater importance than his demand for municipal ownership was his tax reform plank. With this he struck a vital spot of many of the good and law-abiding citizens, namely, their money bag.

Theories of socialism and anarchism were heard. Yet, Tom L. Johnson demanded but just taxation. In this connection the Johnson method furnished a rather incongruous example. Johnson himself was accused of not paying his just share of taxes, and took the matter into court. After a litigation lasting several years the case was settled by compromise. He defended his private interests against his own preaching with as much vigor as did Mark Hanna. He horrified the

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teachers of morals by his declaration that he would make money out of monopolies as long as the law tolerated monopolies, though he was against them. The elasticity of his conscience was as remarkable as was his purpose to stand up for the rights of the people.

The declaration that he would make money from monopolies was first made by him as a candidate for Congress, but he repeated it in his campaign speeches on different occasions. There is no doubt that he was sincere in his attacks on the monopolistic principle. Far seeing as he was, he could perceive the danger for the future of the nation, if monopolies were to obtain control of the states' and the national government. He abhorred revolutions, had not the least use for the military power, and was a firm believer in the power of the ballot. Reforms, he believed, must be wrought through the ballot and not through the ax.

History would not, he said, repeat itself, since the world's progress in the last one hundred years had created conditions en-

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tirely different from those existing before the great modern inventions. Besides, there never was any country like the United States with universal suffrage as a safety valve.

He was an optimist in all things, and would hardly ask the question whether or not the human animal would change its nature. He believed in men, because he liked to be among them and needed them for his plans. Solitude had no attraction for him. His election to the office of Mayor of Cleveland was highly gratifying to him. He saw great possibilities in his future work, for which he had the necessary business and political training, and an abundance of intelligence, energy and good will.

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IV

MAYOR JOHNSON

ON the morning of the 4th of April, 1901, Tom L. Johnson took the Mayor's office by storm. He actually burst into the room. Mayor Farley, seated at his desk, looked up and beheld his successor. A cloud darkened his face as he arose. His greeting was chilly, but Mr. Johnson took no notice of this. He announced that he had qualified for the office of Mayor, and was ready to take up his duties. "But there is no hurry, Mr. Farley," he said. The ex-mayor did not tarry long, for he hated the new man, with whom he had nothing in common, even in politics, though both were Democrats.

There was special reason for the haste with which Mr. Johnson assumed his new work. He had some days before procured an injunction against Mayor Farley who was

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on the point of signing an ordinance turning over the rights of the city to lake front land to the steam railroads. The injunction expired at 11 o'clock A. M. Half an hour before that time Johnson became Mayor, and the ordinance was never signed. The lake front leases are still in the courts.

Mayor Johnson, happy as a lark, had a well-conceived plan for the development and aggrandisement of the City of Cleveland. Streets were to be paved, and sewers built as fast as possible. The new water-works tunnel, begun under McKisson's administration was to be finished; grade crossings were to be abolished; new bridges across the Cuyahoga River, a new City Hall, a new Market House for the West Side of the city were included in the plan. There were many other things to be done. Mayor Johnson insisted upon clean and well-lighted streets, that the great park system be opened for use of the people, public bath houses, first-class fire and police protection, new hospitals and better conditions for the poor and for the

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prisoners in the city institutions. He particularly demanded cheaper street railway fare.

In order to secure these improvements two elements were required—honest and efficient officials, and money. Mayor Johnson, who had the appointing power under the then existing federal plan of city government, chose for his department chiefs men of unusual ability, of integrity and untiring devotion to duty. The people had elected with him a Council of his own choice, or nearly so. At all events he had a working majority and could execute his plans as far as the Council was concerned.

The money question offered more difficulties, but Johnson had the experience of a business man and was, besides, a man of resourcefulness. He was an expert in taxation matters, having studied them under Henry George. There was plenty of money in Cleveland which could be made available, if he could get at the tax dodgers.

Being a thorough-going man he began at

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the root of the evil, the iniquitous appraisement of all taxable property. The famous tax school under Peter Witt, of whom we shall learn more later on, was established. Peter and a number of clerks made large maps of the city, showing all properties and their real values. The result of this work was a howl from the rich and a grunt of satisfaction from the small property owners. Peter was reckless enough to proclaim with a loud voice that the great burden of taxation fell upon the poor. Of course, this was nothing new, but Peter had the figures in all instances. Mayor Johnson was denounced for spending the people's money in illegal enterprises. He answered that he would pay the expenses of the tax school out of his private purse. Thereupon the tax school was killed by decree of court, but the judge was kind enough not to condemn the Mayor to the payment of said expenses, and Mr. Johnson did not reach into his own pocket. The tax school had cost the people something like $30,000. It was a small matter, after all, for the much

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attacked school led nine years later to new and better taxation laws. It also led to a fierce struggle between the Mayor on one side and the County Auditors, the Legislature and the great corporations on the other side.

Undaunted, Mr. Johnson sought to prevail upon the County Auditors to assess the railroads at the same rate as that at which other private property was being appraised. The Auditors refused to listen to him or even to receive his figures, which had been worked out with great diligence by Professor E. W. Bemis. The sessions with the Auditors were stormy, and Mr. Johnson did not mince his words in argument. His effort was of no avail.

Apparently more successful were his efforts to secure a just appraisement of the property of the public service corporations. In filling the vacancies in the annual City Board of Equalisation he appointed four new men in sympathy with his policy. The board added to the duplicate nearly twenty million dollars, by raising the valuation of the prop-

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erty of the street railroads, gas and electric light companies. The higher assessment went upon the tax duplicate, but the companies never paid, for they succeeded in Columbus in causing the new valuation to be stricken out. The city having expected an increased income through this source, faced a greatly reduced revenue.

Mayor Johnson saw quickly that he had to carry his fight into the State and before the Legislature, a Republican body. His energy, and enjoyment of strife were such that he promptly undertook an energetic campaign. Though victorious in electing a Democratic delegation from Cuyahoga County, he found himself confronted by an immovable body of Republican politicians at the State capitol.

He was frequently accused of neglecting the affairs of the city, and devoting his time to politics. The small minds could not understand the big aims of the man. He had tumbled into a Herculean task and used gigantic energies to accomplish it. There was

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really something heroic in his efforts to overcome the obstacles which were thrown in his way. As Mayor of Cleveland it was incumbent upon him to seek ways and means which would enable him to meet the demands of a new era in municipal life. It was his right and duty to go before the Legislature and ask for such laws as he thought would be necessary. The affairs at home were in good hands.

There can be no question that Cleveland to-day would be the most advanced city in the land, if he had had a free hand. He would have spent millions upon millions for her development in all directions. The money was to come from an equal taxation, and the city being rich, there would have been plenty of it. He had the people on his side, but not the rich and the powerful. His great scheme fell through in spite of his mighty efforts. The courts and the Legislature were invoked by his enemies, and the contests were bitter ones.

Johnson's endurance and power for work

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seemed without limitation. While he became engaged in his great struggle, he still found time for the details of his home work. New life entered the City Hall. Things had to be done quickly, for patience he had but little. Yet he was no scold. His knowledge of municipal matters was astonishing. There was no hesitancy on his part in deciding a question, be it of a financial, political or technical nature. He was naturally a mathematician, a builder, an engineer and a mechanic. Long explanations were cut short, for he would see the merits of a case in an instant, and seldom made a mistake. His solutions took account of the future, farsightedness being one of his great gifts.

Those who accused him of negligence in his municipal duties knew little of his methods.

"I am responsible and want to be responsible for my administration," he used to say, "and therefore I must be informed on what is going on." And he was informed. His directors made no appointments without his

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sanction, nor did they introduce new measures without his knowledge. He had a good memory and allowed nothing to escape him, even to the smallest details. It was a pleasure to watch him at his work, to hear him tell a funny story, illustrating a case on hand. His smiling face and his familiar way of treating with people became well known. He, however, could say "no" more easily than most men, but he possessed the rare faculty of not thereby offending the petitioner.

He demanded unquestionable honesty of his officials and employés, and was without pity for an offender. During the first few months of his incumbency a newly-appointed officer was convicted of some dishonest transaction. He called the man to his office, read him the riot act, discharged him on the spot, and almost threw him bodily out of doors. The newspapers were informed of the occurrence, and the Mayor announced that swindlers were not to be protected. During almost nine years of Mayor Johnson's administration, not a half dozen cases arose in

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which occasion required that city employés be dealt with for dishonesty. This was certainly a remarkable showing, and one of which the City of Cleveland may well be proud. No scandal could ever be attached to the Johnson administration.

With the entry of Tom L. Johnson into the City Hall, Gentlemen George and John made their exit. One could see them formerly at every meeting of the City Council. Now they became not only invisible, but also almost uninfluential. Of course, at election times, they would see to it that their men were elected from wards where the Mayor's friends were in the minority. In the Council, the other men were in the minority, so they could do little harm and were carefully watched besides. The scenes under the former administration, when the people hunted certain Councilmen with ladder and rope for trying to sell them out to the Railway Company, needed no repetition. The eye of the boss was watchful, and it was a sharp eye.

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There is no denying that Johnson had absolute control of his Council from the beginning to the end. The working majority was with him with one short exception. On that occasion there were seated in the Council seventeen Republicans and fifteen Democrats, the president of the Council also being a Democrat. The leading Republican members were men of small calibre, and Johnson was able to outwit them on many occasions. One of the Republican councilmen died and it became the duty of the Council to elect a new man. Johnson succeeded in winning one of the Republican councilmen over, and in the place of the dead Republican a live Democrat was elected. With the vote of the president, the working majority was restored, and the Mayor once more enabled to follow his course.

There were also a few instances when some of the Democrats in the Council rebelled against his dictation. He either succeeded in reconciling them to his leadership or defeated them at the polls. He preferred the

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latter course, as he was always more or less distrustful of his converts. During his first three terms his orders were unquestioned, but later on, when the Street Railway fight had become tiresome, the Democrats would try to convert him to their views expressed in caucus. He was obliged to yield on certain occasions. He was not intolerant of opposition, and found pleasure in combating opinions different from his own, so long as no important matters were to be decided. On more than one occasion he deemed it expedient to take his opponents in the Council severely to task, and even to accuse them of dishonorable conduct. Of course, he had no direct proof, but his suspicion had been aroused and he took this means of uttering a warning. He cared but little whether he gave offence or not on these occasions.

Mayor Johnson never objected to being called a boss, though he was most of the time, especially in later years, careful to hide his personality behind the Council, when measures of weight were to be considered.

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"It all depends," he used to say, "whether a boss is a good or a bad boss. A bad political organisation is worse than a good political machine."

His City Hall machine was working to perfection, not only in a political way but also in the fulfilment of civic duties. The different departments were well organised and demanded a full day's work of their men. Of course, there were some instances of unfaithfulness and laziness on the part of employés. However, such men would never last long, and it made no difference that a given culprit were an active and valuable politician, and with influential friends backing him. In such cases Mayor Johnson sustained his directors or went even farther than they did themselves. He wanted strict honesty and adherence to duty, nothing less would do. He would not allow himself to be moved by pity or political considerations. It was a strong trait of his character to stand by his officials when he thought them in the right. As an executive, he had no superior,

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and the same may be said of him as an organiser.

It required but a short time for him to advance the City of Cleveland to one of the best and most honestly governed places in the country. He spent more money than any of the former mayors, and under his administration the bonded indebtedness was steadily increased. The small politicians made a great noise about extravagance. Yet, at no time were they able to prove that the money was not spent well and honestly. Johnson as a man of large business experience, was wont to figure with dollars where they turned a penny over. Some of the people failed to understand him, because they were not used to seeing a big man occupying the Mayor's chair. It is an erroneous idea that Johnson had no friends and admirers among the business men of the town. Even in the Chamber of Commerce his friends could be found in goodly numbers. Many of them expressed no opinions, but on election day they cast their ballots for him. Some considered his

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election and re-elections as a calamity for the City, yet they and Cleveland survived the shock splendidly.

The Republican party nominated the best of their men against him, but they went down in defeat, even as strong a politician as Theodore E. Burton. The Johnson victories would have been impossible without the votes of the business men. They recognised his capability and saw that he gave the city an honest and progressive administration, such as it had never had before. He antagonised them in many ways, and was forgiven. His re-election in November, 1905, by a plurality of 12,169 votes was a great tribute to his popularity. The people of Cleveland rewarded his successful efforts in building up their city. Many streets had been paved since 1901, and many sewers built. The streets were clean and well lighted, the parks made accessible to the common people; the former "Keep off the Grass" signs had disappeared, and upon the very lawns picnics could be held. To the last Mayor Johnson

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and his administration marched abreast with the times, assimilating and putting into practice the most advanced theories on the governing of a modern city.

Those who were in a position to watch the daily life of the City Hall became impressed with its intensity of purpose, its manifold activities and its earnestness to master every new arising task. It was not to be wondered that Cleveland began to make a name for itself in this large land of ours.

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THE JOHNSON MANSION

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V

THE HELPERS

NOT little of the praise and credit belong to the men who labored with Mayor Johnson in the advance of Cleveland. Wont to follow his own dictation, he selected as his assistants the men whom he thought capable, disregarding party lines in many instances, and also disregarding the dissatisfaction of the patriots. It almost caused a rebellion when he appointed E. W. Bemis superintendent of the Water Works with instructions to manage them regardless of politics. Bemis obeyed, and soon was the most ridiculed and most hated man in the City Hall. He was innocent of business experience, made errors like an absent-minded professor, but had a great understanding of figures, and did very well, after all. When the downfall of the Johnson administration

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came, he received a splendid offer from the City of New York, and left Cleveland with "a smile for those who hate," to speak with Lord Byron.

The Department of Public Works was during the first term of Mayor Johnson under the management of Chas. P. Salen, who proved capable. Mr. Salen, having been elected to a county office, was succeeded by W. J. Springborn, formerly a Republican member of the City Council. The choice proved to be excellent. Springborn was a young man, who had to work his way up in this world and was without much schooling. He, however, possessed something better than a mere book education. He was endowed with common sense, great industry, a fine memory and quick comprehension. There was nothing of the fanciful about him. He was more in favor of clean streets, good sewers and a good garbage plant than of beautiful buildings or parks. From early morning till late in the evening he worked in the interest of the city, looking after every-

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thing, being everywhere. He was a perfectly honest man and constantly striving to save money for the city. He knew the value of a penny. Thoroughly in accordance with Mayor Johnson and his views on municipal ownership, he built up a practical street-cleaning plant, a garbage plant, and an electric lighting plant, all of which proved of great value. It was his greatest pride to be able to demonstrate the possibilities of municipally owned institutions. The people recognised his merits and applauded him vigorously whenever he told them in his simple way what his department was doing for them.

The Public Parks department under Director Daniel E. Leslie followed the popularising policy, inaugurated by Chas. P. Salen, with great success. The large and beautiful park system (luckily started by a far-sighted commission that was violently criticised by the near-sighted) became within a short time a recreation ground for all the people. Much was done in establishing baseball grounds, children's play grounds, in

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erecting shelter houses and bath houses, and in providing free concerts, children's days in summer, and skating carnivals in winter. Little attention was given, however, to the zoological garden, a neglect much to be regretted. Neither the Mayor nor his Director were so philosophical as to become interested in animal life.

Mayor Johnson placed "his preacher," Rev. Dr. Harris R. Cooley, in charge of the Department of Charities and Corrections. Some of the wiseacres sneered at this selection, but within a short time, Mr. Cooley proved to be more than a preacher. He was a broad-minded man of action and one of not words alone, a great big bundle of humanity, a true friend of the suffering and the downtrodden. His kindness was without bourn, his faith in the good of men unshakable. Being an assiduous student of sociology, he knew the ailments of society and understood the lugubrious influences at work. He was not afraid to put the blame where it belonged. As far as it was in his power he

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tried to alleviate the pains of soul and body. No one was too lowly for him to consider, none unworthy of being redeemed. He brought his head and his heart into his labor of love.

The outcome of his activity while in the employ of the city was the abolition of the old poor house system. In its place he established a Farm Colony, comprising almost two thousand acres of land. Here the poor were taken care of in a home-like fashion. Man and wife were not separated but had a comfortable room in a pleasant cottage. The prisoners at the Workhouse were sent to the Farm, not in chains, but like free men. The guards had neither gun nor pistol, and it must be said that but few of the prisoners sought to escape. They were well fed and worked in the open, where healthy surroundings exercised beneficial influences upon the men.

A Boys' Farm was started, and here, too, the character of a public institution was avoided as much as possible. The boys lived

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in cottages under the supervision of kind people, were schooled and received instructions in the practical working of garden and farm.

The Outdoor Relief Department sought employment for the strong, and extended its aid in various new directions. Yet it was always the aim of Director Cooley to bring lasting benefits. He even tried to cure the drunkards and was not without success. Fresh air, sunshine and healthy employment did much to help the poor wretches. Words of encouragement, a friendly interest, were Director Cooley's medicines. He paroled prisoners to give them back to their families whenever they needed them, and it was not very often that he had reason to regret his kindness and his belief in human goodness. He founded a Brotherhood Home, where discharged prisoners without funds could remain until they secured employment. Mayor Johnson, who attended the meetings of the Board of Pardons at the beginning of his term of office, was wont to put a five-dollar

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bill into the hands of this and that discharged prisoner to give him a fresh start. This brought happiness to the convert and also to the Mayor in his enthusiasm for better conditions for all men.

Director Cooley gave splendid service, and, by and by, his fame spread over the land, and people came from far away, even from across the ocean, to see and to learn of his work. To know him was to like him. He was a good speaker, and his voice would quiver when he told about his wards and their needs and sorrows. And there was not a Councilman who would not vote for the appropriation for which Director Cooley had asked. Few men of his kind have lived. Hats off to them. With a bleeding heart he took leave from his friends and brethren, the poor, lowly and downtrodden, when he was forced to say "Good-bye."

Another man who assisted successfully in the great work of developing and modernising the City of Cleveland was Dr. Martin Friedrich, appointed health officer by Mayor

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Johnson, after a former appointee had been summarily discharged, as above mentioned. Dr. Friedrich, a German by birth, began an unceasing war against all unsanitary conditions and became known as a fearless smallpox fighter. His two predecessors had not been able to stamp out the epidemic raging in their time. The new officer required but a few months to free the city from the dire disease. Since that time all contagious diseases have been carefully watched, physicians have been sent to the schools to examine all children at regular intervals, the water supply has been continually inspected, the building of sewers urged, and there was much disinfecting done in public buildings and private houses. The general health of the city was enhanced, and in the year 1909 Cleveland showed the lowest death rate of any of the larger cities in the country. Dr. Friedrich was no politician and is not affiliated with any party. He put his whole soul into his work as it should be, and is a man of fine intellect.

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In the course of time the administration of the City of Cleveland was spoken of in the press of other cities. The magazines contained lengthy articles about the Mayor and his methods, and Mr. Johnson was declared the best Mayor of the best governed city of the United States.

The citizens of Cleveland, not the hostile politicians, appreciated the efforts of their city administration. They knew that intelligent, clever, and honest men tried to do their best. Not always did they understand the aims of Mayor Johnson, who frequently marched ahead of his time. The conservative element found fault with his methods and accused him of burdening the city with debts. He was accused of spending too much money on the poor and that the Workhouse did not pay, as in former years. It was not his intention to make that institution a source of revenue, nor to be saving in matters of charity. On the other hand, he suppressed unsparingly low dives, and the social evil as much as possible. His Chief of Police, Fred-

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erick Kohler, made a name for himself, being recognised as one of the most energetic and successful police officers in the country. Mayor Johnson was of a liberal turn of mind, and well aware that narrow views on the Sunday question would not do in a city like Cleveland, with its conglomeration of nationalities, he did not enforce the antiquated blue laws. For this he was frequently and severely criticised, but he laughed at his critics.

It was ever his aim to lighten the burden of the poor. He abolished almost entirely the license fee system. Hucksters and pedlars were no longer required to pay their hard-earned pennies into the city treasury. He demanded from his Council fair wages for the city employés, but was averse to increases for the high-salaried officials, making exceptions in very few cases.

Dealing with great questions he almost invariably antagonised the "interests." He demanded full protection of the city, never retreating one step from his demands. Thus

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the building of a new Union Depot was delayed until this day; the street railway question caused a war forever famous, and regrettable, in a way, at least. The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company fought his demands and had soon a competitor in the East Ohio Gas Company, a Rockefeller concern furnishing natural gas. This company was given a franchise with a stipulation that the City Council should have the right to fix the price of gas every ten years. The Mayor's enemies entitled it a perpetual franchise. He declared it a franchise renewable every ten years. Opinions differ on this point, but Mayor Johnson was accused by some of his bitterest foes of having received a million dollars for saddling this grant upon the city. Of course where Mr. Rockefeller is concerned, a million is like a drop of water in a bucket. They might, therefore, as well have said ten millions, and their accusation would have been just as plausible. As to his integrity in municipal affairs, Mr. Johnson needs no defender. He had passed the stage

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of deals and made his conditions known from the beginning.

If the politician was predominant in Mayor Johnson, his instincts of the former business man were still noticeable. He could never be induced to make war on the smoke nuisance, though recognising its great detriment to the people and their homes. "Where there is smoke, there is business," he used to say and dismiss the subject. He was always willing to grant the railroads permission to lay tracks across the streets or to make betterments. In the building of a belt line to further traffic he sided with the railroads, though deputation after deputation of citizens whose properties were of need injured, pleaded with him for protection. He had a way of subjugating the smaller for the bigger thing.

The building of a new City Hall and a high-level bridge across the Cuyahoga River were frustrated by the voters, who refused to sanction the necessary bond issues. Some of the most dangerous grade crossings were

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abolished, however. A great plan, redeeming the lake front for park and business purposes for a distance of over six miles was conceived by Mr. Johnson towards the unexpected end of his public career.

In the course of time the actualities of the daily life and strife pushed his theories on sociology into the background. He had not given them up nor changed his views upon any of them. Single tax and free trade no longer belonged to his daily curriculum, however. They went down with his defeat in state politics, and were of no use in his great street railway fight, which in the last few years absorbed nearly all of his time. Yet it cannot be said that he neglected many of his other duties as Mayor. He had department heads in whose knowledge and integrity he could fully trust. The City Hall machine, not politically speaking, worked to perfection. Besides, Mayor Johnson could expedite business in a truly wonderful way. He worked as much in a day as half a dozen ordinary men. His working day ex-

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tended over sixteen and more hours, Sunday not excepted, when occasion demanded it. His power of concentration was great and is one of the secrets of his success in life. No matter how many different questions were brought to his attention, each one was given due consideration, followed by quick decision.

His theory on municipal ownership was as much exploited as circumstances and the state laws would allow. Contracts for street cleaning and street lighting were cancelled or left unrenewed when they expired. The private company which collected garbage was bought out and two electric lighting plants became the city's property by annexation. Mayor Johnson was very solicitous that these plants should make a good showing, and Director Springborn succeeded in rendering them effective.

Enemies of the administration tried in vain to convert the citizens to a contrary view. The building of an art museum was delayed because Mr. Johnson insisted on a stipula-

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tion fixing the days of free admittance, after the trustees of the museum had demanded the cession of park land for a site from the city. It was his constant aim in those matters to watch and extend the rights of the public.

While Mayor Johnson did not succeed in all his great plans, he gave the City of Cleveland a clean and honest administration. He awoke the people to their interests and educated them in municipal matters so well that they overthrew him, when they believed that his usefulness had come to an end. To-day the people of Cleveland are perhaps better versed in public affairs than the citizens of any other city of the United States. He was a great teacher, and his greatest legacy is, after all, the public spirit which is awakened in his fellow citizens. It was beyond human power, even for this extraordinary man, to overcome the resistance of a united class of influential and powerful men, who saw in Mayor Johnson an enemy, and who had the law machinery and the powers of the State

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on their side. Only a man of his intelligence and forcefulness, could accomplish anything under those circumstances. The City of Cleveland owes to Mayor Johnson a monument, as much as the Chamber of Commerce owed one to Mark Hanna.

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VI

TWO RADICALS

A MAYOR like Tom L. Johnson needed a city solicitor after his own heart. It did not take him long to find one in Mr. Newton D. Baker, a young lawyer from West Virginia, who had come to Cleveland in 1899 at the age of about 28. Mr. Baker was small of stature, smooth-faced, had dreamy eyes, carefully-combed hair, was neat in appearance, and had the aspect of a poet and a scholar. His body slightly bent forward, he moved along with a peculiar gait, seemed always absorbed, and never having much time for anybody. Yet, he was a thorough gentleman, polite and even considerate. There was something soothing in the tone of his voice, which made itself heard in the purest and most select English you could possibly listen to. Everybody praised him

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for the fine use of his mother tongue, and it was indeed a treat to listen to the music of his words. Even the coarse and the illiterate were charmed by his language. By and by the flatterers came around and told him of his great gift, as if he were not aware that he possessed it. Yet, he was in danger of being spoiled a little by this hymnus song from all sides.

He was unsurpassed in telling a story, or in addressing the City Council on some special subject which had aroused his interest. But he reached the height of his oratory when eulogising his friend and master, the Mayor. In his great political speeches (and he made many very fine ones) he lacked the inner strength to carry himself up to a real climax.

His flow of language was as clear and smooth as that of a silvery brook running through a meadow full of rare and rich flowers. He was possessed of a quaint humor that ran into a slight sarcasm when the occasion presented itself. It must be consid-

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ered a great pity that this master-artist of English chose the profession of a lawyer. His written legal opinions were mostly horrid examples of how one may obscure a meaning by a sea of words. It must also be said in his justification, that he never considered himself a great lawyer, and was always willing to recognise the talent on the opposite side of the trial table from where he, however, carried off many a brilliant victory. That he was drawn into politics is perhaps more lamentable than his becoming a lawyer. His preceptor, it is true, was no common politician, but there are mean tricks in the game that must be played. There can be no doubt, that Mr. Baker felt an aversion for his position after his initiation, but there was no way out of it under the circumstances. In the course of time he proved an apt disciple, yet a true politician he could never be, and did not wish to be. His tendencies were rather of an aristocratic nature; he was more of an observer and listener, than a talker. The society of the cultured suited his tastes

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better than intercourse with the ordinary man.

A true estimate of the character of Mr. Baker is a difficult task. Like Hamlet, he was not as easily played as a flute. He felt no desire for an expansion of his feelings, and could not be called communicative. He was careful even to hide the vanity his great gifts might have excused. He tried to suppress the impatience which sometimes showed itself against his will. As a philosopher he was thus constantly disciplining himself, avoiding exposure of weak spots. Always measured and gauged, he was master of himself, and therefore master of his surroundings. Endowed with a good memory, quick perception and a great thirst for knowledge, he was indefatigable in acquiring learning. A despiser of newspapers, he read many books of ancient lore and modern wisdom. Few men possess the vocabulary of which Mr. Baker could boast, few his ability to make use of the knowledge gained by reading.

It always seemed a contradiction that this

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lawyer and scholar should espouse the cause of the people and take interest in modern sociology and political affairs. As a student of human nature, of course, he might discuss those things in an academic way, but that he should throw himself, body and soul, into the midst of the daily turmoil of our present struggles, does appear incongruous. The solution of the riddle must be looked for in the influence which Mayor Johnson gained over him. Mr. Johnson loved to surround himself with clever and bright young men, and Mr. Baker was the leader of them. He gained Mr. Johnson's confidence as no other man before him, and, no doubt, no one deserved this confidence more than he. His admiration for Mayor Johnson came dangerously near to adulation.

On one occasion, after a splendid speech of the Mayor to his City Council, Mr. Baker was heard to say, "There must be a special heaven for men like Mayor Johnson."

The feeling honored him, but on the other hand it gave evidence of blind enthusiasm.

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Maybe enthusiasm is always blind. His loyalty to Mr. Johnson was admirable to the last, and it cannot be said that Mr. Baker was of an ungrateful nature. It is a question, however, whether he would, standing alone have followed the same course as he has in the last eight years. His inclinations speak against it.

The friendship of Mayor Johnson for his young city solicitor was remarkable. He, at times, needed a man to whom he could confide his troubles and vicissitudes, though it is not likely that he revealed, even to him, his innermost desires and plans. Those, no man knows. It was not an easy matter to be a friend and co-worker of Mayor Johnson. He demanded much of a man's time, energy and ability. The day had often twenty-four hours for both of them. Mr. Baker was a great worker, but his work was always of an exacting nature, and in the course of time his features showed the strain under which he worked. There came a time when the freshness of youth vanished from the hereto-

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fore young-looking face. Still the work kept on, and so did Mr. Baker.

Mayor Johnson was no great observer of law, and very apt to stretch a point or two. It was the duty of the City Solicitor to show him his error. Much of reasoning was to be done by him, and he was not always successful. Like all strong men, the Mayor wished his way, and as a consequence many fruitless lawsuits must be fought out. The Street Railway lawsuits were a task to put to the test the best of lawyers, and Mr. Baker had the strongest legal lights against him. For six long years he fought them almost single-handed with the various ups and downs common to warfare, but finally he came out the victor in a glorious struggle with an inglorious end.

From the court room to the political tent was but one step in those days. Solicitor Baker was fully in accord with Mayor Johnson's doctrines. He preached single tax, home rule, free trade, tax reform, direct vote, and death to the special interests. Very se-

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rious he was, and with his splendid oratory it was easy for him to sway his audiences at pleasure. But it must not be surmised that he was a cold-blooded orator. He warmed up to his subject, and at times was even a little nervous, like all good speakers. One almost forgot, listening to him, that he was preaching the new Gospel of the Times, that he considered himself a radical. His diction was too beautiful for a revolutionist, his manner too gentle. Yet, there he stood, advocating the destruction of the old political structures and preaching the redemption of the people. They needed the sermon, no doubt. Of course, as a lawyer of good standing, he kept within the law, never criticising a court decision, even if it came from the Supreme Court of the United States. He would, however, collar a justice of the peace, having no use for that kind of renderer of judicial wisdom.

The solicitor claimed no ambitions beyond the fulfilment of his daily duties, but he was

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human like the rest of us, and had gotten into politics.

A man who gave a certain distinction, or, if you will, notoriety, to the Johnson administration, was City Clerk Peter Witt. He was of the common people, stood by them, and fought their battles with the "big stick," though he hated Roosevelt. Peter, as they called him, had a common school education, learned the trade of an iron moulder, and became a union man, anarchist, socialist, tax reformer, City Clerk, lecturer on municipal affairs, and a political speaker. His assets were a good intellect, splendid memory, fearlessness, honesty of purpose and an almost uncontrollable tongue. His onslaught was simply terrible, and spared no one, not even Tom L. Johnson.

At one time he began to study law, but being no juggler of words, he found it impossible to continue, and stopped then and there. Peter had to say what he thought of a thing

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or a man in plain language, and had no patience with studied effort to hide an opinion. If he believed a man to be a rascal, he told him so, using that expression. He would call a man a thief, if he felt justified in doing so, even if that man was a judge. The representatives of corporations always fared ill with him. As a young man he had felt the pangs of cold and hunger, the hopelessness of the shop worker, and later on the misery of mankind in general. Being optimistic by nature, he was not crushed by wretched experiences, but aroused to opposition and fight.

He saw the gulf between the rich and the poor, and began to study the cause. The selfishness of the human biped dawned upon him, but he saw it first only in those of the possessing class. He found that the laws were made by that class and for it. A young man yet, he could not discover the great principles of nature underlying the struggle of life, and therefore attacked most violently the foe as he saw him. From the rostrum

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he addressed the people in his fearless way. He was an uncouth, but forceful and sarcastic speaker, quick at repartee and not without some beautiful sentiments.

After a while he wrote a book flagellating the tax dodgers, and thereby arousing the disgust of many people. He had no reverence for church or preacher, and was therefore held in abhorrence by the best of our citizens. On his side there were the downbeaten, the outcast, and the crowd of godless sinners who despised the laws and institutions of the land, and honored no man on account of his office or his station in life.

"He goes too far," the peace-loving listener to his speeches would say. "Give it to them," cried the man in rags. The prominent citizen would walk away, perhaps with a smile, perhaps with a pious wish in connection with a rope and a lamp post. Peter would go him one better. He did not keep his wish to himself, but expressed it often and in a loud voice. Yet it would be a grievous thing to mention here the many good

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law-abiding men who inwardly rejoiced at Peter Witt's strong expostulations and confessed approval to their wicked pleasure in listening to them.

Witt had many open and many silent friends. Those who knew him well, wished him well, for he was a man of good qualities of heart and character, social, bubbling over with the joy of living, and a good spender if he had anything to spend. He was honest and brotherly, but merciless towards cant and hypocrisy. Nothing and nobody could stop him from mentioning names when his ire was aroused. As he was very well informed about men and things he could strike hard and did it. It happened sometimes that he would wrong the best of men on the strength of some doubtful information. He, then, would repent with a curse at his mistake.

This was the man that Tom L. Johnson befriended, though his name had been mentioned in Witt's book about the tax dodgers.

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He made him head of his tax school, and the schoolmaster proved a success. Mr. Witt, in the course of a few years had learned some new things, and met the people he used to attack face to face in an official way. Some of them took a fancy to him, but it happened more than once that he would ruthlessly destroy their good opinion of him, if he thought that they were trying to take advantage of the city or the people. One might have taken him for one of the Incorruptibles of the French Revolution. Had he lived then in France, he would have forged his way to the front, and, no doubt, cut off heads and lost his own.

After the famous tax school was closed under a decree of court, Witt became City Clerk, to "draw an income for doing nothing," as he used to say. Nevertheless he attended to his duties and between times went on short lecture tours, spoke in political meetings, showing tax pictures and "getting even" with his foes. He was a disciple of

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Izaak Walton, and would often disappear for a few days or a week during the fishing season to woo the finny tribe.

His relations with the different councilmen were very friendly, and he gained the good will of everyone, though he would sometimes lecture them severely if certain of their official actions did not please him. Neither was Mayor Johnson spared the displeasure of Mr. Witt, if that gentleman did not agree with him. Mr. Johnson knew his man, and took no offence.

In the course of time and through the influence of his surroundings, Peter Witt lost some of his ferocity, acquired a little more tact, and became more of a polished speaker. He was really an orator, in his way, natural, forceful and sometimes picturesque. It was useless for him to prepare a speech, for he could not adhere to a preconceived idea, but spoke as he felt, when addressing an audience. Then he "let go," as he has said.

In him one certainly found the man who at all times, and under all circumstances, had

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the courage to express his opinion, and express it with vigor. In this respect he was a curiosity in an age when men are masters of the art of dissembling.

Had Mayor Johnson been possessed of the philosophical mind of a Socrates he would have sought the friendship of Peter Witt as a healthful discipline against pride and conceit. But as it was, he saw in him a useful addition to his official household. He was not mistaken, for Peter had a following among the workingmen, who liked him as much as he was detested by the men who had no love for Johnson.

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VII

THE POLITICIAN

SOON after Mayor Johnson had taken office it became apparent that a new political era was to begin for Cleveland. He had succeeded in uniting around his banner the democracy of Cuyahoga County, with the exception of a small coterie of old-time Democrats. These men promptly declared him a fraud and a humbug, but their voices found only an echo in the ranks of the Republican politicians. The people were with Johnson, who had returned to Cleveland with new doctrines. Being, however, an astute politician, he was no doctrinaire, and did not always follow his own preachings.

His experience in Washington and New York had shown him the difficulty of winning a great mass of people to new ideas. He therefore used as the slogan of his may-

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oralty campaign: "Three cent fare on the street cars." It was a seductive war cry and led to victory. Home rule, municipal ownership, tax reform and single tax were all parts of his creed, but less emphasized. That he was a free trader everybody knew, and many called him a socialist, which he was not and could not have been.

Tom L. Johnson, the politician, was never well understood. His alert nature drove him instantly toward new things. His practical bent of mind prevented him from entertaining extreme views, and from drawing the last conclusions. Being a selfish, rich man, he would not quite emancipate himself from his riches, even in thought. He declared repeatedly that he was no philanthropist and he knew how to hold on to his belongings. But, having given up money-making to satisfy his political ambition, he saw with keen insight the great wrongs of our political and industrial systems. Feeling in himself the strength of a Hercules, the cleaning out of the Augean stables became a great tempta-

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tion. He might do an immense service to his country, as mayor, governor, and finally as president. There is no doubt that he cherished such a thought, and—*honi soit qui mal y pense.*

As a former monopolist he was not opposed to large enterprises and saw their necessity under the prevailing conditions. He himself wished to be one of the conquerors of the earth. Yet, he could foresee the dangers lurking behind too much rapaciousness, and he felt for mankind in general. He wished to avert the day when a hungry and infuriated populace would not only plunder plutocracy, but also strangle it. They called him an anarchist and a socialist. He was rather the former than the latter. His anarchism consisted in enough disrespect for the law to demand its alteration for the good of the masses. It was rendering a service to his enemies, according to his views, to warn them in time of impending danger, by pointing the way to safety. Of course, it meant sacrifices to them, which they were not willing

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to make. He on his side was ready to force them to yield through the courts, the State Legislature or Congress, or through pressure of public opinion.

He was not a socialist because he did not believe that nature made all men equal or that natural differences could be overcome by human precept. Neither did he believe man equal to the task of formulating a ready-made economic system.

Political economy was with him a matter of development, and his whole political activity was based upon this view. The great enterprises of the "interests" could therefore be regulated, but their right of existence was not questioned. He favored labor unions as long as they did not interfere with the success of legitimate business.

When Johnson became Mayor of Cleveland the movement to purify the administration of American cities was becoming a fashion, and he was about the first to give it a practical demonstration. Cleveland had at that time another distinguished citizen,

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Mark A. Hanna, the friend and "maker" of President McKinley, and the most powerful member of the United States Senate. The political and personal interests of the two men were as antagonistic as their natures. They had fought each other in street railway wars that were to be renewed, and in addition stood upon different political platforms. The citizens of Cleveland began to see interesting times.

Senator Hanna had not been in politics as long as Mayor Johnson, but his experience was on a larger scale. He was the better business man of the two, and also a more forceful character. Behind him stood the most powerful interests. He was not a politician in the accepted meaning of the word, but a business man in politics. Of Johnson it might be said that he was also a politician in business. Hanna, in his sometimes brutal frankness, remarked on one occasion that if he could not combine business and politics he would give up politics. Johnson gave up business to go into politics.

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The senator's enemies saw in this declaration a frank confession that he meant to make money out of politics. Of course, they could not accuse him of stealing in a legal sense, but rather declared that he manipulated legislation in his and his friends' favor.

There is no doubt that he was perfectly sincere in his political convictions. It was his opinion that the prosperity of the business world meant also the well being of the workingmen. In this sense he worked and toiled for his country and his fellow citizens. He was of a generous disposition and wished to advance everybody's welfare. But he found little time to study the wretchedness in the huts, and had a rather dangerous conception of the power of money. He was accused of supporting the old adage that every man has his price.

The business men saw in him their champion, the labor unions an enemy to their cause. He answered them with the "full dinner pail" and won them over.

His friendship and devotion for McKinley

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was one of the strangest traits of his character. He had put him up as an idol and became its most pious worshipper. There was a certain grandeur in this adoration. During the campaign following the untimely death of McKinley, he would speak of him with an earnestness and a depth of feeling that turned a political audience under a flapping tent canvas into a congregation of believers. Mark Hanna was not a fluent speaker but he spoke with great force. When aroused he was as a volcano in eruption. His words exploded like thunderbolts and were convincing, in spite of poor argument.

Contrast with this the easy-flowing conversational speeches of Tom L. Johnson, interspersed with humorous stories and keen remarks upon things and men. He amused while teaching his lesson, and spoke rather to the intelligence than the hearts of men. His speeches reminded one of the picture of a beautiful butterfly, descending here and there for a moment upon a chaliced flower to sip its honey. He would never delve deeply

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into a subject in his speeches, but seemed only to skim the surface of things. His thunder was of the nature of the sharp crack of a whip.

The battle between the two men was like the fight between Siegfried and the dragon. Subtlety, ruse and perseverance on one side; strength, ferocity and hatred on the other. The skirmishing had begun during the mayoralty campaign, but the fighting line soon extended beyond the city and county lines into the territory of the State. Mayor Johnson was the first to use a tent for his political meetings. He was derided and ridiculed as a circus clown but the time came when even the stately Mark Hanna found the use of a tent expedient. Yea, he was not adverse to having a band of music or a negro quartette upon the same platform with him.

Tom L. Johnson abhorred these things and would have none of them. Neither would he contribute during campaign times one cent toward charitable undertakings of any kind,

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declaring that it was not his intention to buy votes in that or any other way.

"I have no use for boodlers," he was wont to say, "and any man who thinks he can get money out of me might just as well stay away."

His enemies called him stingy, and would not believe that he made his rules in the interest of the purity of elections, but treated his action as a personal convenience and as a safeguard against spending his private funds. They pointed to the liberality of Mark Hanna, who would generously give to hospitals and churches while a campaign was in progress. Of course, his enemies called this bribery and vote-buying. Johnson spent large amounts of money during his campaigns for printed matter and for his tents, of which there were soon two in use. He never forced any city employé under his direction to contribute toward the campaign fund, but the money nevertheless was forthcoming. The executive committee of his party would see to those details, without

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troubling its head, the Mayor. On the other side, Senator Hanna was famous as a getter of money for political purposes.

Both men entertained an intense desire to win in the game of politics. Johnson had drawn first blood, and was quick in following up his advantage. The citizens of Cleveland generally favored his claim and on November 5, 1901, he also won the county election. Mark Hanna was furious and had recourse to a desperate measure. The Republican State Attorney General Sheets was prevailed upon to bring an ouster suit against the city of Cleveland a month after the election. The city's affairs were at that time administered under the so-called "federal plan," which held the Mayor responsible for all municipal acts and gave him the power to appoint his board of directors. The plan had worked to the general satisfaction of the citizens of Cleveland and had been devised ten years before by some of the best of legal lights. All at once it seemed to have become illegal and impractical. The Supreme Court of

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Ohio was of that opinion and said so. The result was that all city governments in the State were destroyed, all improvements stopped. In Cleveland the hand of the law rested heavily upon the City Council and the administration. Another suit was brought to oust the Council, and an injunction granted to prevent passage of any franchise ordinances. Street railway franchises were the particular subject of attack.

The indignation of all classes of citizens knew no bounds, and Mark Hanna was roundly denounced. Nobody believed, of course, that the obscure citizen who had lent his name to the ouster suit, was acting of his own volition. The people comprehended fully the significance of combining business with politics. It is possible that Senator Hanna understood much better than the people the danger of having a Tom L. Johnson in his way. He thought to annihilate his enemy with one great stroke and set courts and Legislature in motion. The move was clever enough, but it miscarried, after all.

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The cities of the State having no longer any legal standing were unable to forward even urgent business. It became necessary to call a special session of the Legislature, which convened on the 25th of August, 1902.

The so-called Nash code had already been prepared by friends of Senator Hanna and Boss Cox of Cincinnati. It sheared the mayors of their powers and placed the administration of the cities in the hands of boards, their members to be elected by the people. The governor of the State was given power to remove the mayor of any town if that official could be convicted of malfeasance in office. The deliberations of the Legislature were of short duration. On one of the early days Senator Hanna appeared before that august body and spoke in favor of a perpetual franchise clause.

Mayor Johnson, at home, fairly "boiled over" with wrath when he heard of this demand. He, too, went to Columbus, where he informed the lawmakers that perpetual franchises for present monopolies meant indus-

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trial servitude for unborn generations. He also told them that the people could always be trusted to protect their own interests and to do justice to those with whom they deal. He demanded that all franchises to public service corporations be submitted to a vote of the people for ratification. This demand was a plank of his platform.

The Legislature, of course, paid no heed to his speeches, which made quite an impression at home, and passed the code as originally planned. Yet Senator Hanna was not able to secure enactment of his perpetual franchise proposition. That demand was too much even for a legislature. It was an unreasonable demand in the light of our present-day teachings on municipal subjects. It had been asked in the spirit of the fortune hunter and not in that of a wise statesman. It was one of those propositions which illustrate the forgetfulness of our leading business men of the general welfare of their fellow citizens. It was one of the things that make a Johnson necessary, or a La Follette, or an Altgeld,

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or even a Roosevelt. Senator Hanna embodied the feeling and thinking of his class of men, who conjure up revolutions by their unsatiable thirst for power and riches. An Olympian spectator can well understand their dominion of worldly affairs, for they are the men of brains, energy and enterprise. He, too, sees their limitations, their human short-comings, and their blindness to a higher life. The exploitation of the treasures of the earth and of the discoveries of science would still be carried forth on the largest scale possible if it were done for the benefit of all instead of the few. The doctrine of "The survival of the fittest" represents a hard truth, but the ethical side of mankind is also a reality and will perhaps prevail at the end. At least let us hope so. *Et pur se muove.*

Johnson, shorn of his power as Mayor under the decision of the court, busied himself with politics more than ever. He did not fear to criticise the Supreme Court of the State, nor the Legislature, scandalising

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thereby the law-abiding citizens. While the General Assembly was in session to pass the new municipal code, he entered state politics and succeeded in nominating Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow of Cincinnati as the democratic candidate for secretary of state. Bigelow was an old friend of his, a splendid speaker and a man of advanced ideas. He attacked Senator Hanna. It was he who coined the phrase, "Mark Hanna preaches the Golden Rule and practises the Rule of Gold." Both Johnson and Bigelow went out into the state, speaking in many counties. They travelled in an automobile belonging to the Mayor, a powerful machine which became known as the "Red Devil" and aroused much curiosity. A report of this method of campaigning even reached Europe, where the newspapers published a highly ludicrous legend. Heralds and trumpeters preceded the procession to announce the coming of the prophet. The villagers and farmers gathered everywhere in great numbers to see the "Red Devil" and its pas-

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sengers. They listened to their speeches, which told them of the iniquity of the tax laws and how the people bore the burdens of the corporations. Then they heard of home rule and how every community should make its own laws; that the citizens should not give away franchises of any kind without retaining full control over them. They also learned that Senator Hanna was a boss who sought to "run things" to his own personal satisfaction.

The Reubens listened with mouths and ears open, then shook their heads in astonishment and went back to their ploughs. A few days later Senator Hanna and his friends arrived, speaking from the rear-end platform of a special train. The Senator told the same audiences with all his earnestness, that they had listened to a hot-air artist, a humbugger, and a socialist. He told them that a wise man "leaves well enough alone" and refrains from speculative politics and new fads. And lo, they applauded him, and believed in him, and when the 4th of Novem-

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ber had come and gone Herbert Bigelow and his friend Tom L. Johnson found themselves buried under an avalanche of state ballots. In Cleveland and Cuyahoga County the Mayor, however, had once more beaten Mark Hanna.

Next in order were preparations for the great home battle to be fought in April, 1903. The Republican politicians, filled with the joy of their victory in the fall, had Johnson buried in anticipation before his time. The judgment of the average politician is always poor, because he never sees but one side (his side) of a question. Senator Hanna was less confident and left nothing undone in the formation of a strong phalanx against his enemy. Under the leadership of the Senator the Republican party was stronger than ever and had the means to accomplish great things. The debts of the county committees were promptly paid, the interests were liberal and the workers not without means.

On the other side Mayor Johnson worked his street railway bugaboo for all it was

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worth. "One more victory," he said, "and the people will ride on the cars for three cents." He told them of his tax fight and how the public service corporations had made secret settlements to avoid the payment of larger sums. He told them what so far had been done under his administration, what was being done, and what would be done in the near future. Of course, the people knew all this and recognised it and went wild over him at his tent meetings.

These tent meetings were different from the customary political gatherings with their brass bands or negro quartettes. Tom Johnson believed more in arguments than in entertainments. Besides, he himself was entertaining enough. His speeches were never long, but bright, easily understood, to the point and in a popular vein. He caused the public to take part in his meetings by inviting them to ask questions which he would answer with much alertness, humor or wit. Here he was at his best.

Of course, most questions put were of little

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or no value and frequently stupid or foolish. Some poor ignoramus, sometimes under the influence of liquor, would ask a question not pertinent to the subject matter under debate.

"Throw him out," a voice would be heard from a corner.

"Let him ask his question," Mr. Johnson would say, and then proceed to answer with a witty remark that caused convulsions of laughter among the easily satisfied.

"Give it to him, Tom," some enthusiast would cry out amid this general hilarity, and Tom would "give it" to him.

It must be stated that his answers were usually fair, though he did not entirely refrain from trickery. He understood in a masterly manner how to handle a large and unruly crowd of men. His remarks often became as sharp and cutting as a whip and were quite authoritative. It was always his desire to speak in the camp of the enemy, but he never found an adversary among the

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"PARDON ME, MR. GARBER, BUT I'D MUCH RATHER SING THIS ALONE"

Cartoon which appeared during one of Johnson's campaigns

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other side courageous enough to invite him to the platform.

Once in a while he would appear in a Republican meeting during a campaign to hear what the speakers had to say. His presence created uneasiness among the politicians, who on one or two occasions lost their heads and demanded his retirement. Of course he did not remain where he was not wanted, but told afterward with much pleasure of his little adventure in a chilly atmosphere.

"Poor politics to allow Tom Johnson to talk at our meetings," the Republican committee-men would say. Yet he invited their speakers constantly to his tents. The invitations were accepted very rarely. He always saw to it that his guests were protected against insult but proceeded to down them in argument to the best of his ability. His joy was great when he could down an adversary.

After Johnson came Newton D. Baker, who was the better speaker of the two. He made

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a speech while Mr. Johnson gave what was really more of a talk in his easy, natural way. Mr. Baker would speak of Mr. Johnson as his chief, as a man whom the people ought to follow because he was leading them to great achievements, who had made Cleveland the City on the Hill and who was the great leader and tribune. But Mr. Baker would also treat the questions of the day with precision and clearness, and was deservedly much applauded. The hit of the evening was generally made by Peter Witt, who received a noisy welcome from the audience. Peter's specialty was the taxation question, and the people liked to hear him, because he told them who was who when it came to dodging the payment of taxes. He would spare no name. Peter, too, invited questions, but woe to the brute who might step upon his toes. His sarcasm was like acid, his repartee quick and killing like a stroke of lightning. The unfortunate victim found no sympathy among the audience but was hooted and laughed at.

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The good people and the cautious politicians shook their heads at the fierce onslaught of Peter Witt. Even Mayor Johnson would reprimand him, but one could perceive that he was not in earnest in so doing.

The Johnson meetings were always interesting and brought many Republicans to the tents. There is no question that Mayor Johnson put new life into the political campaigns. He forced his adversaries finally to adopt his methods. Mark Hanna himself would answer questions, though he never liked the new kind of warfare. Johnson's influence over an audience was remarkable. There was a strong personal magnetism ever going out from him toward the people. In his light and easy manner he would speak to them about municipal matters, state or national questions. He brought them something new, something that was of interest to them, and after a half-dozen campaigns, the citizens of Cleveland were different people, politically speaking. Thanks to him, they were among the first ones in the country to

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see the dangers of great monopolies, of plutocracy whose rule has ruined wherever it has held forth.

He gave a practical demonstration of his preachings by attacking the street railway companies and had also planned to overcome the electric lighting company of Cleveland at the time he was himself overcome. Nevertheless, he was never able to persuade a number of the people of his sincerity. He was constantly accused of serving the people not from the heart, but because of political ambition. Events toward the close of his public career seemed to confirm this belief. He was not always consistent in holding holy the principles he advocated. His political life demonstrated that opportunity played a great factor in his doings, especially after the first four years of his successes. There was nothing in this to those who had a chance to study the man Johnson. The people at large saw in him their champion as they saw in Mark Hanna the representative of the rich. In April, 1903, they had not forgotten

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what happened to them the year before and when the municipal election was over, Tom Johnson saw himself re-elected with a plurality of 5,985, and with him were chosen the men who had worked under him before the Legislature had deprived the mayors of the cities of Ohio of the right of making their own appointments. Thus Mr. Johnson's victory was complete, in spite of the opposition of the mighty Hanna. About those times the friends of Johnson used to say that the Senator could not be elected a constable in his home city.

The Democrats were jubilant and celebrated their victory with great enthusiasm. Mayor Johnson, with face radiant, smiling and happy, conceived still greater things. He now thought the time had come to expand. The prestige of his great victory secured him the much coveted leadership in state politics, in spite of a strong opposition from many politicians in his own party. They feared him, and he despised them openly. It cannot be said that Tom L. Johnson was

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very diplomatic. On the contrary, he was outspoken in his likes and dislikes. He would go into a county in any part of the State and fight a member of the Legislature who was up for re-election and who had voted in favor of measures obnoxious to the Mayor of Cleveland.

It was soon rumored that Mr. Johnson was striving for the gubernatorial nomination. His friend, Charles P. Salen, who was in a way a better politician and organiser than the Mayor, was during the spring and summer of 1903 frequently out of town. He undertook diplomatic missions among the Democratic state leaders, who hated Johnson. The astute Mr. Salen won them over, for he, too, had a winning smile for men of his kind. By and by the rumors became more persistent. The true friends of Johnson took alarm at them and hastened to question him.

"To be Mayor of Cleveland is good enough for me," he answered. "I have no desire to be Governor of Ohio."

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Such were his words to the best of his friends a few days before the meeting of the Democratic state convention of that year. Notwithstanding his denials, they warned him against an undertaking that looked like nothing more than a "gamble" lost in advance. Senator Hanna was seeking re-election from the next Legislature and would, no doubt, make the supreme effort of his life to beat his arch-enemy. Johnson had never shown any strength outside his own county and city, yet, here he was, ready to contest a state election under such circumstances. It was not an easy matter for him even to secure the nomination from his own party. Without Salen he could not have done it. He knew all this, must have known it, for he was an able student of political currents. But, as said before, there was something of the gambler and plunger in his nature. He would take a risk as long as it did not cost his head. He would still be Mayor if defeated as a candidate for Governor. After all, who knows? There was his luck, which

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might carry him into the state capitol. Such things had happened before.

For his own justification, and as a reason for his candidacy he made up a programme. He declared that there could not be good municipal administration so long as it was controlled by the State and corrupted by corporations. Also did he find it necessary to become Governor in order to carry out this programme. He received the nomination from his party, and forthwith began a most vigorous campaign. The people of Ohio now had their turn in surprises. His great circus tent was erected in many counties where Johnson was not personally known. Good speakers travelled with the candidate, not excepting Peter Witt, who made many a flying trip through the State. John H. Clarke, a very intelligent and highly respected citizen, and chief counsel of the Nickel Plate Railway, was Johnson's candidate for United States senator and therefore running directly against Mark Hanna. Mr. Clarke, who was a fine and forcible speaker,

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won many admirers. Though a corporation lawyer, he was a man of independent views and thoroughly democratic, though not always in the Johnson sense. He differed on some big questions with the candidate for Governor and said so at their meetings. But Johnson was broad-minded and rather liked opposition as long as it was not directed against his own plans.

The Democratic State ticket of that memorable year contained the names of fearless and progressive men. The legislative ticket of Cuyahoga County represented well the Johnsonites. On the other side of the battle field stood Senator Hanna with a guard, old and tried in Ohio politics, and well equipped for the great strife. The onslaught of the Democrats was fierce. Their main fire was directed against the Senator and Boss Cox of Cincinnati. The former was accused of favoring government by injunction, of perpetual franchises for public service corporations, of unjust taxation, and of threatening to take away the jobs of workingmen who did

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not vote for him. Johnson, the Democratic speakers declared, was leading the fight for the people and their rights. A great stir was made but the Johnson candidacy created no enthusiasm among the people. The Mayor in his impetuosity had tried to create a psychological moment and missed his guess. Two years later would have been the right time for Tom L. Johnson.

Senator Hanna went into the campaign with much confidence but yet with some trepidation. He knew his adversary to be a man of many resources and of great energy. Wherever the Mayor's "Red Devil" went, the Senator followed to undo the damage wrought by the enemy. He depicted Johnson, just as on former occasions, as a charlatan, an anarchist, and a bad man on general principles, bent on creating unrest and dissatisfaction, a demagogue who wanted to empty the dinner pail of the workmen, filled by the Republican party. He evoked the ghost of McKinley in a tremulous voice and thereby greatly impressed his audiences.

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The result of the campaign was a most inglorious defeat. Never before had a Democratic candidate for governor been beaten with such a majority of votes against him. Johnson came home, and two days after the election his laugh was as gay as ever. He was still Mayor of Cleveland. Yet it was the last time that he played a rôle in state politics. The Democratic leaders and corruptionists dropped him as if he were a hot iron that had been forced into their hands. They had certainly voted against him. Well-informed politicians were emphatic in their declaration that Johnson had been given the nomination in order to exterminate him from state politics. The scheme, if such existed, had worked well. But as before, Cuyahoga County stood by Mr. Johnson, gave him a majority and elected his delegation to the legislature. It was of no avail. The Republican majority ignored the little group from Cleveland, and would not listen to the best of propositions. Senator Hanna caused the spring elections to be abolished in the

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hope that he might beat Johnson in a fall election, when the people would vote on a state ticket.

Destiny spared him a bitter deception. Mark Hanna had greatly exerted himself during the campaign. He was a vigorous man, but much older than Johnson and hardly in condition to follow the latter in his travels over the State. In December he showed signs of a collapse and his physicians urged him to recuperate in the South. He refused, as the legislature was to be arrayed in line for his re-election to the United States senate. Thus he continued working and at the beginning of 1904 he was re-elected. Congress being in session, Senator Hanna returned to Washington to take up his duties there, having hardly taken any rest. At the capitol his work was arduous. He was still a leading spirit though the advent of Roosevelt had relegated him to his seat in the senate chamber in place of his former sphere of activity in the President's private rooms. "The Interests" urged him to run for the

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presidency and many politicians there were who prophesied his nomination and election.

Suddenly the news came from Washington that Mark Hanna had fallen sick with typhoid fever. Grave fears were entertained from the first, for his weakened condition was known. He died in March, begging of his physicians, who tortured him with efforts toward resurrection, to permit him to depart in peace. The old Roman sentiment, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum,* being out of date in our days, Senator Hanna's death was rejoiced over by his diabolical enemies, who forgot that they too were mortal and of much less consequence. Whatever might be said against Mark Hanna as a politician, he was a man of strength, a Bismarck, in a certain sense, who with a strong hand and sure of his purpose, went straight toward his goal. It could be argued that a Bismarck had no place in a republic, but the iron chancellor of the German Empire was not less hated and admired than Mark Hanna. The senator had no patience with the new movements

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of our times; he was old-fashioned in his political views, a practical man of affairs, using the means at hand to gain his point, which was adverse to socialistic preachings of any kind.

Tom L. Johnson regretted the untimely demise of his enemy, the only one he found truly worthy of his steel. He had beaten him a half dozen times at home, and was defeated by him a few times in the state. Thus honors were about evenly divided. The death of Hanna, however, caused a disintegration of the Republican party in Cuyahoga County. It split into factions after Charles Dick, Hanna's hireling, was selected to be the successor of the dead giant. A pigmy was put in his place, and, of course, had no influence or power over restless and ambitious politicians.

Mayor Johnson had smooth sailing from that time on, as far as politics were concerned. In the fall of 1905 he was re-elected Mayor by a plurality of 12,169, carrying with him the entire city ticket, a few councilmen

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excepted. As a Democratic governor was elected at the same time, Mr. Johnson was hopeful of becoming once more influential in state politics. But the governor died before he could accomplish much and was succeeded by a Republican lieutenant governor. Johnson inaugurated an organization of the mayors of the State to establish home rule measures. A bill was drawn up, and things looked bright for a time. However, his hopes were not realized. The organization did not last, and the bill fell to pieces. But it was through his original efforts that another bill was passed in time by the legislature, the bill that made a rate of two cents per mile a reality on the railroads within the State of Ohio. It was also through his initiative that a law reforming the taxation system was enacted and another law prescribing the referendum in connection with street railway franchises. Considering that all his recommendations were opposed by a hostile legislature on political principles and personal spite his achievements are the more

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remarkable. His enemies at home and throughout the State were so strongly biassed against him that they would not think of considering his propositions on their merits.

Mr. Johnson, however, saw clearly the trend of the times, and was convinced that nothing could prevent the ultimate success of his ideas. He was not deceived. By and by they would appear in the camp of the enemy, find supporters, and be finally enacted into laws. Of course, nobody in connection with his bills thought of the name Johnson, but they were his ideas just the same. In Cleveland his public activities had created a new standard for municipal affairs; in Ohio they spread the seed of an awakened political conscience. We already perceive the sprouts raising their little heads here and there, and nobody needs to give up hope for a better future. All over the country good men are at work to save the Republic from destruction; men who are not destroyers but up-builders, not demagogs but level-headed

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citizens; men who have the welfare of the human race at heart, who want to see happiness instead of desolation, and who clearly feel that we have wandered too far away from the principles of our great Constitution. "Back to the Declaration of Independence," must be our slogan, if we are to be saved.

The law which abolished spring elections carried also a proviso that municipal elections alternate with the county and state elections. Many politicians deplored the suppressing of the spring elections, but the people were glad to get a breathing spell. Mayor Johnson, who now spent nearly all of his time in carrying on his war against the street railway company, sought another reelection in the fall of 1907, and won with a greatly reduced plurality. It was his last victory at the polls.

A year before the county had gone Republican, and a year after, in 1908, history repeated itself. In 1909 Johnson himself was defeated after being beaten in several street

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railway battles during the year. The business world had become tired of the continuous strife, and aroused itself to a great effort, which succeeded. In reality it was not the Mayor who was discharged by the public, but Tom L. Johnson, the street railway man.

The storm clouds could have been seen gathering for a year before a feeling spread that Mr. Johnson had lost himself in a *cul-de sac,* and that there was no more help for him. He did not even try to turn back when he was loudly accused of neglecting the general affairs of the city. He knew that many parts of the municipal machine were running by themselves under the care of his directors, and that he gave them all the personal attention necessary. His great working capacity was still with him. But outside appearances were against him, and he was too self-reliant to heed them.

His friend Salen had had several quarrels with him and was accused of trying to overthrow the Johnson régime. On several occasions Salen essayed the capture of the city

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council, but with poor success. He allied himself on different occasions with the anti-Johnson forces in the State and threatened to run for Mayor against his old master. Tom L. Johnson, who was usually quite outspoken in his likes and dislikes, never said an unkind word against Salen. He openly acknowledged the right of the latter to become a candidate, most likely because he knew from his thorough understanding of the man that Salen would side-track at the last minute, and also because he did enjoy that right. As an acute politician Mr. Salen never announced his candidacy but permitted others to spread the rumor, which he would not directly contradict. Occasionally, Johnson and Salen would become reconciled, when a campaign was coming on and help each other. It was somewhat of a comedy the two were playing. Salen liked to display a certain independence as becoming a political boss and Johnson had no objection. The thing was harmless, but Mr. Salen had bitter enemies among the friends of Johnson, the foremost

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of whom was the irascible Peter Witt. These men berated Salen as a traitor, and accused him freely of having contributed to the downfall of Johnson.

Both the Mayor and Mr. Salen were in need of each other during the election times and did not deceive themselves on this point. It is not unlikely that Salen at one time counted on Johnson's support for the mayoralty nomination, and was therefore willing to see him elevated to the governor's chair. He was undoubtedly dismayed at the Mayor's great failure as a candidate for governor and went his own way to a certain extent. It was generally known that Salen's one ambition was to become Mayor of Cleveland.

As a statesman Mayor Johnson entertained high ideals and advocated the cause of the common people. As a politician in working clothes he played the game of politics in the ordinary fashion. He valued his men in accordance with their utility and their devotion to him. He would mercilessly crush actual opposition in his camp and would befriend

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men whose reputations were unsavory. He would even employ them in minor positions. On the other hand, only the best were good enough for places of importance. His tendencies were of a liberal nature, and he would not judge too severely the morals of men as long as they were honest and steady in the fulfilment of their duties.

Diplomacy was not a part of his character, but he was cunning, resourceful and quick in action. He would become exceedingly aggressive and would not, in such moments, listen to the best of his friends. It was one of his shortcomings not to seek advice from old and tried friends, who had opinions of their own. He preferred to work out his political schemes without assistance from those sources. Impatient by nature, he would, once in a while, make a grievous political *faux-pas* which could not be retracted. As an example of this kind may be mentioned his extremely violent and personal attack on Governor Harmon in the Democratic state convention of 1908. The great majority of delegates

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were against him but, undaunted by this fact, he undertook to denounce the candidate of the convention in one breath as a reactionary and as an agent of the brewery interests. Harmon was nominated and elected and Mr. Johnson found himself afterwards in a position where he was obliged to ask favors of the governor.

No, Johnson was not a Marcus Antonius. His friends ever claimed that he was not in politics for personal ambition, but for the cause of the people. Yet neither his actions nor his character warranted such an assumption. It is more likely that he espoused the cause of the people because it would serve him as a ladder to climb into high office. Being of a domineering spirit he naturally could not ally himself with men of his own class, but was rather prompted to rise in arms against them. Ambitious, he wanted to lead; curious, he espoused new things; without imagination, he entered politics. His declaration of love for the people had a false ring; yet, he would serve them, and fight for

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them with all his strength and power. Neither was it ambition alone that prompted him to enter the public arena. The vastness of the arena had its allurement. Here he could display his overflowing strength, his natural inclination for combat. Here he would be seen and heard; here he could do great things, useful to his fellowmen. The immensity of the practical tasks he planned for himself drove him into the camp of the people, made him believe that he took a real interest in them. It was an unconscious self-deception. Whenever he lost sight of his ideals there was nothing of a Jones of Toledo in him. But those ideals do him great credit, and directed even his indiscretions towards the betterment of the general conditions of mankind.

Those who could only judge him from a distance and through the newspapers were easily led to believe in the cry that he was insincere. He was honest in his great struggle for the people's rights and welfare, but his motive was not an inherent love for his

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fellow-beings. It was a love for the mastery of great things, combined with an ambition to shine and to be a leader of men. That he did not succeed was due entirely to his own failings, for he had the intellect, the force of character, the energy, the power of endurance and the tenacity to overcome every obstacle that men could put in his way. Later on, his achievement as a politician will be seen more clearly and also more appreciated. He has done more than one man's work in his day and due credit should be given him.

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VIII

THE MAN

IN personal appearance Tom L. Johnson was a stout, portly gentleman of medium height. His features were of a fine cut and in his youth he must have been a pretty boy. There was something of the expression of a bird in his countenance, let us say that of a magpie. The eye was bright, lively and intelligent, and always on the *qui vive.* His motions, too, were quick and alert, like that of a bird. The nose, and the mouth with its thin lips were well shaped. The chin was strong, but nicely rounded. His was a fair complexion in his days of health. His personality was as strong as his back was broad, and needed room, even to the crowding of others.

He was jovial and genial, with a smiling countenance, but could look terribly stern

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and imperious. His manners were perhaps a little brusque, but to come in personal contact with him meant to like him. One could not get away from his magnetism, from his merry laughter, his pleasant familiarity. He made friends wherever he went, enemies only of those whose interests he crossed. They were not few, however. A man of his character is bound to be greatly hated and greatly loved. His simple and democratic demeanor won him the friendship of the people, the silent contempt of the vulgar rich. Nobody could be more pleasant and more overt than Johnson. His excellent health, his optimism, his natural carelessness of forms, made him an ideal companion in an idle hour. He was a good story-teller, with an infectious laugh. He was on occasion full of mirth and merriment, and liked to see young faces about him.

The companionship of men seemed to be more attractive to him than that of ladies, although he was not adverse to their presence and was quite free and easy in their so-

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ciety. Like most of our business men he had but a poor taste for art and literature and no real desire for the theatre. His taste was for work in his youth and early manhood, and for politics in his later days. Neither did travel appeal to him, though he crossed the Atlantic several times. The beauty of nature never aroused his enthusiasm, and a sea of human beings had more attraction for him than an ocean of water.

On the other hand, he was fond of mathematics and of solving problems that dealt with actualities. His mind turned to inventions, and in the basement of his mansion he spent many an hour in the construction of a suspended railroad that was to attain a speed of two hundred miles or more an hour. The invention was never finished. At one time he bought a few acres of land and spent a large sum of money establishing a trout pond. In about three years he sold farm and fish, having become tired of it all, yet the farm, with its gully and pond, was a most picturesque piece of property. But he had

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only thought of the fish and the fresh vegetables of the farm and not of its beauty.

Mr. Johnson was a spare drinker, but a good eater. He liked a full table, but could content himself with the simplest of food. On an election night he would indulge in a bottle of beer and half a dozen bags of salted popcorn, over which simple repast he was quite happy. He was fond of entertaining a few friends at a time at his spacious mansion, but rarely were the doors opened for great social functions. In fact, society was against him, as he was against it. His political activities had estranged him from the four hundred, who could not pardon a man of his means for associating with the plebiscite. Although a member in good standing of the aristocratic Union Club, he made fun of it, criticised it, and "roasted" it. He alluded to one of the highly-esteemed members of the Chamber of Commerce as "Mr. Pink Whiskers." His friend Peter Witt spoke of the "Onion" club and Mr. Johnson did not call him to order. Of course, respectable

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citizens could forgive Peter but to Mr. Johnson forgiveness was never offered. Thus Johnson was obliged to content himself with the society of his political associates, with whom he seemed as happy and lively as ever.

In the large reception room of his house he would frequently gather about him the young men of his inner administration circle to talk with them about civic problems over a cigar. There was no drinking nor were refreshments served. Mr. Johnson would recline on a comfortable leather lounge and around him sat in easy chairs or ottomans his associates. The humblest of them would feel quite at home. Here also were welcome visitors from other places. William Jennings Bryan, Henry George, Jr., and others found at Mr. Johnson's home a hospitable roof.

Mr. Johnson entertained a high opinion of Mr. Bryan, though he did not agree with him in all things. He took him for a bright, versatile and able man, and fought his last battles in Ohio. Bryan himself was more of

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a diplomat than a friend toward Mr. Johnson, to whom he caused some bitter disappointments. In this respect the Mayor was dealt with as he had been in the habit of dealing with others in political matters. He buried his resentment but did not forget it; in fact, he never forgot a humiliation and was the very man to retaliate at the opportune moment.

Mr. Johnson's fortune was a large one, insuring him an income sufficient to enable him to live in opulence, and to keep up an expensive establishment. While satisfying his every wish, he was not regarded as a liberal man with money. Of course, he provided for his family according to his means and aided "on the quiet" some poor relations. He was very much attached to his brother Albert, with whom he had been associated in business, and whose untimely death caused him real sorrow. He was an indulgent father and a good husband. His daughter, Elizabeth, generally known as Bessie, was the pride of his life, and when she con-

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tracted an imprudent marriage, he stood by her in the hour of need. She had many traits of character in common with her father, was bright and lively, full of activity and ambition. She was on the stage for a time and wrote novels and dramas, which showed some literary talent. She was an attractive and prepossessing young lady. Unfortunately, she became the victim of a well-educated and smooth Italian fortune-hunter. It required but a few weeks for her to learn her error.

"Bessie, right or wrong," said her father; "I am with her." His home and his arms were wide open for his child, who returned to the family home before the honeymoon was over. A few months afterward a divorce freed her from an undesirable husband.

This quick and decisive action was much applauded by the friends of the Johnson family and was quite in accordance with the ways of Mayor Johnson. He was not a man to be trifled with and could hardly be said to be considerate toward people who were indifferent to him. Yet, as a father he was almost

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more than indulgent. His son Loftin, who was considered an intelligent young man, belonged to the *jeunesse dorée,* without being restricted by paternal authority, a rather uncommon fact, considering the great demands made by Mr. Johnson upon the working capacities of the people under his authority. Mrs. Johnson, a good and dignified lady, was much attached to her husband, whom she used frequently to accompany to his political meetings, ever watching and worrying over his welfare. In his days of triumph she sought to soften his impetuosity. In the times of sickness and trials she was at his side with a soothing and nursing hand.

Yet such was the vitality and energy of Tom L. Johnson, that he disregarded during his fatal sickness the advice of his physicians and the pleadings of his family and went to England to attend a meeting of "single taxers" to whom he made a speech. After his return to Cleveland he appeared at a number of political gatherings, though appearing weak and exhausted. He simply

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refused to be a sick man and fled from doctor and all across the ocean into a foreign land, where those he met knew nothing of his disease and could not sympathize with him. He had ever been an impatient man, impatient with himself as well as with others. However, he was not unkind and was ready to make amends for any hasty action. It was rather his firmness of character than an unfeeling heart that made him appear uncommonly stern at times.

His tenacity of purpose was more than wonderful. It was impossible for him to yield in matters of importance upon which his heart had been set. He was a born fighter, indefatigable, courageous, always at the front. His power of concentration was marvellous and enabled him to accomplish more than an ordinary man. This form of concentration made it possible for him to dismiss every care and worry and to enjoy life in the midst of strife and battle. He was a splendid sleeper, insisting upon a sufficient number of hours of rest. "Bright as a dol-

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lar" after awaking, he seemed to smile upon the whole world with the pleasure of contentment. But he was not a man of solitude; he needed people around him, and an occupation for his mind. Late in years he engaged a French tutor with whom he studied the French language while seated at the breakfast table with his family. He learned enough to read Dumas the elder with pleasure and to speak a little of the language. At the least he could make himself understood in French in a case of necessity. His daughter learned to speak French fluently, an accomplishment which enabled her at one time to take part in a drama played by the Club Français of Cleveland. Mr. Johnson was a proud father that night.

He was much liked by the people in his employ, though exacting in his demands. With a number of servants in his house he was most popular. He was naturally their master, and did not find it necessary to exert any authority. He would laugh with them like a comrade and help them along in time of

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trouble. His French tutor received through him a city position which could almost be called a sinecure. The wretch showed his gratitude by becoming a defaulter and disappearing. His name was Louis Devineaux.

There was animation and life wherever Mr. Johnson appeared. Like Joe Emmett, he seemed always accompanied by a ray of sunshine. Yet his personal magnetism was not of the kind to draw out the best in man. He did not invite confidence, as he could not take a real interest in his fellow beings. His intimate friends were few, his admirers many, the sycophants around him noticeable.

Easy-going in some respects, he would tolerate in his political kitchen a few men of shady reputation and unsavory renown. Of course, he had nothing to fear from them and was not averse to make use of them should occasion demand it. One remarkable circumstance was the wide knowledge Mr. Johnson possessed about the leading citizens of Cleveland. He knew of their foibles but never referred to them even in times of po-

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litical warfare. He took no undue advantage in such cases.

He was not insensible to flattery. This man of the people had his vanities like all of us. Yet it was astonishing that his sharp and discerning intellect should often fail him in the judgment of men. It would not be fair to claim that he, though seeing, would not see, but it is true that he allowed himself to be cajoled into the belief of infallibility and that this state of mind grew worse with every succeeding victory. Peter Witt alone had the courage to admonish him, but he was treated more or less as a court jester, and preached to deaf ears. Men who have no time to take a look at themselves are apt to forget their weaknesses and faults.

Mr. Johnson, like many business men, contributed to a church and caused his name to be registered by one. It is doubtful whether he could be called a Christian, though he never said anything to give offence even to a pious minister of the gospel. He could not bring himself to believe in the germ theory

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in spite of all that learned physicians might say to him on the subject. But he was full of sympathy with the good work done by his friend, Rev. Harris R. Cooley. He believed in the uplifting of mankind and in relieving the suffering of the poor. A man of large means, he conducted the city institutions on a larger scale than they ever had been before. It was not his intention to be saving in the administration of the Outdoor Relief Department, and he said so openly.

Taken all in all, Tom L. Johnson was an "uncommon" man, highly gifted in intellect, happy through a sunny disposition, endowed with great strength of character and a wonderful capacity for work. He was possessed of indisputable personal magnetism and an honest desire to be useful to mankind. His mind was of a practical turn, not very enthusiastic, but persevering to the end. Though quick-tempered, he was not abusive, but neither was he forgiving when insulted. One might have spoken of him as being even vindictive. He had to suffer many a fierce

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attack, but beat them off with never-failing courage.

He lacked the finer qualities of the well-educated man, the higher morals of the philosopher, and the inherent reverence for absolute truth. He was essentially the product of American life with its struggles, its disregard for conventionalities, its love for achievement and its recklessness in gaining an end. But after all he had been favored by nature like a prodigious child. He made many enemies in his life, but still more friends. He must be judged by this standard by those who could not understand him.

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IX

A GREAT STRUGGLE

WHEN, in the spring of 1901, Tom L. Johnson became Mayor of Cleveland, he had promised the people a fare of three cents on the street car lines. When he was retired from office in the fall of 1909, undone, and a sick man, the people had their three-cent fare or something near to it. Between the two dates lies a period of almost superhuman struggle, of much rejoicing, much heartache, of broken hopes and silent despair.

This fight of one man against a powerful corporation, and its not less powerful sympathizers, appears pathetic in the extreme as one looks back upon it. It brought out the full strength of Johnson and then swallowed him up like a maelstrom, as he had gone one step too far.

Mr. Johnson, who had been a street rail-

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road man all his life, was better equipped than any other to take up the cudgel of the people. He knew that a low car fare meant much to the poor, and that the average rich man was too indifferent or too heartless to comprehend this. He knew that the street railway companies existed, not for the sake of the people, but were in the business for revenue only. He knew that high fare never meant improvement of the service, but greater profits and an extension of the system to make still more money. He knew that the cars would be overcrowded at certain times whether the fare was three, five or ten cents.

Being a good mathematician he saw in cheaper fare an increase in business and hence a growth of gain. Being a good politician he made car fare his main campaign issue. It was easier for him to convince the common people than the conservative business men, who are not always farsighted.

The railway companies, of course, could

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not see the thing at all, or if they really did see it, had also a vision of their watered stock. Any curtailing of their income meant less money and, therefore, the Johnson proposition must be fought tooth and nail. The shepherd dog and the wolves were soon at each other.

Mr. Johnson wanted in the first place a municipal street railway for Cleveland, but the laws of Ohio made this impossible. He thought of a holding company, such as he had already proposed in Detroit, though without success. In the meantime, however, he had to figure upon the street railway situation in Cleveland as he found it in the spring of 1901. The City Council had, since 1898, tried to secure a reduction of street railway fares whenever a franchise was about to expire, but had always met with stubborn opposition from the companies. When they were willing to concede a small reduction in the fare, they imposed other conditions to make up for the loss. They fought reduction in the courts and rested

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their case upon the ordinance of 1885, which, by way of a "sleeper" clause, had taken the right to regulate fares from the council.

It was an open secret in those days that George and John, above mentioned, were manipulating the council as they pleased. They knew neither Republicans nor Democrats, but helped their friends along and smote their foes. Yet the council as a whole had stood bravely by its convictions. It had, no doubt, gotten a whiff of the new times that were coming in municipal matters. The street railway interests wanted new franchises at their own terms for the next twenty-five years. The people sided with their council, and not even the power and influence of Mark Hanna could change the course of events.

The advent of Tom L. Johnson with his three-cent fare proposition gave a new impetus to the street railway war. This time the companies had to deal with a man who was an expert in the business and a man whom they could not deter from his purpose.

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Besides, there existed an old animosity between Johnson and the officials of the one company which controlled the majority of East Side lines and was known as the "Big Consolidated" company, and a political and business enmity between him and Senator Hanna, then president of the other company, which controlled all the West Side lines and was known as the "Little Consolidated" company. The first battles of the war were three cornered, but later on the two companies consolidated, Mark Hanna retiring. The president of the new company was Mr. Horace Andrews, generally recognized as an honorable gentleman. He was adverse to any underhand work, but not less firm than Mr. Johnson himself. A man of good appearance and splendid physique, he withstood the strain of the long fight finally better than the Mayor of Cleveland.

Openly declaring that it was his duty to protect the interests of his road, Mr. Andrews was as stubborn as a mule in defending them.

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"I have been trained to make money," he once said, "and I learned the business."

These characteristics explain in a measure the bitterness of the fight. On the other hand, the company popularly known as the "Concon" was combating for its very existence. It declared a fare of three cents as utterly ruinous, while Mayor Johnson maintained the opposite view.

The first great gun in the home war was fired on December 9, 1901, when councilman Frederic C. Howe, a Republican, but a friend of the Mayor, introduced an ordinance for the establishment of a new street railway system. Competition was the wedge to be tried. Another friend of Mr. Johnson two months afterwards made a bid which was accepted. The bidder, John B. Hoefgen, received a franchise and prepared to build the new lines. The "Concon" went into court and secured a permanent injunction in June, 1902, against construction of the Hoefgen lines. The Mayor and his council answered by introducing a set of new ordinances, care-

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fully worded to avoid conflict with the State laws. Mark Hanna called the Supreme Court to his aid, and the Board of Control was ousted. Being no longer in existence it could not grant permission for the use of the streets to a new company. The council, however, passed the ordinances in spite of the difficulties confronting it. A month later the Supreme Court interfered once more and forbade the council either to grant or to consider any franchises. It went even further and declared the charter of the city as null and void. The charters of the other cities in the State went down with that of Cleveland, all on account of a street railway company.

The fallacy of our legislative and legal systems could certainly be shown no clearer, nor that of the power of a private corporation. This demonstrated a state of affairs which was enough to make a dog howl. Even the citizens of Cleveland did howl at that time. The Legislature, of course, had to grant a new charter, and Mayor Johnson,

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having been re-elected in the spring of 1903, renewed his warfare. A month after election another set of street railway ordinances was introduced, and another bidder was found. In the fall of the same year the Forest City Railway Company was founded and made its first bid for a new set of ordinances covering different lines. The Cleveland Electric Company spent $20,000 for a straw bid, but only lost its money, accomplishing nothing tangible.

In the meantime the first named bidder, with the Mayor and the whole city administration back of him, built two miles of track for the first three-cent line. The Cleveland Electric went once more into court, but this time with little success. The council extended the original grant, and its line was to be built through a great part of the West Side of the city. The aim was to reach the Public Square as quickly as possible.

The street railway companies were still trying to win over some of the councilmen to their cause and were not unsuccessful. In

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Republican wards the people themselves were against the lower fare, mostly because the demand for it was made by a Democratic administration. Yet the selfsame citizens almost broke their necks running for the overcrowded three-cent cars after their appearance in the streets of Cleveland. At the same time the five-cent cars were passing their houses almost empty. Thus does true patriotism show itself.

Senator Hanna, who worked for the welfare of the people according to his gospel, went before the Legislature asking for a perpetual franchise. Tom L. Johnson demanded that all franchises be submitted to a vote of the people. His principle was a good one, but later on he was like Peter when the cock crew. Verily, few people act as they preach, especially when they are politicians and want to make the world happy. But it was always a pleasure to read the pamphlets making their appearance during the street railway war or a political campaign in Mayor Johnson's time. When Mark Hanna saw that he could

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not down his enemy, he tried to oust him. He had the spring election abolished, as mentioned above. He died, but the war went on. Johnson fell in the fray, but the war went on, and is still going on.

For seven years it was a war between the lawyers of the companies, the old and the new ones, with interludes, some of them highly amusing. The lawyers grew fat, and the "Concon" stockholders thin. The citizens would wake up in the morning and find street railway tracks in front of their houses, or to find themselves entangled in a "consent" muddle. Some of the good people had taken "Concon" money to keep a three-cent line from their streets, and wanted afterwards the money of the Forest City Railway Company, which wished to put a three-cent line there. Mayor Tom, too, bought the consents of the people for his railroad. "Better buy the people themselves, than their representatives," he used to say. It was his road even if he had no pecuniary interest in it, as he stoutly maintained, in spite of an adverse

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court decision on this point. His City Solicitor had the time of his life, fighting his street railway battles with an old and tried enemy, he being a young lawyer of rather limited experience. But he was a brave knight, and a winner, even if some of his thrusts went far off the mark. In the course of time he learned to aim more correctly and to hit the foe squarely between the eyes.

It rained injunctions for a time. Every foot of ground that the Forest City Railway Company tried to cover was contested in the courts. On the last day of 1903 the City Council granted an extension to the three-cent company which gave it the right to cross the old Superior viaduct to the Public Square. At about the same time the Council passed an ordinance which gave it the right to regulate the fare on all street railroads. The "Concon" applied for an injunction to the United States Circuit Court and got it the same day. Between injunction time the Forest City Railway Company was proceeding with the construction of its

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line, frequently under the personal supervision of the Mayor. Equipment was procured, Mr. Johnson furnishing the necessary bond, a circumstance which afterwards caused much trouble and led to the above-mentioned decision on the charge of a personal pecuniary interest. It required the power of the court to convince him of his error, though he did not deny the fact in the case.

Mr. Johnson's resourcefulness was shown to no better advantage than in this street railway fight. On every occasion he tried to outwit his enemies. In the depth of the night tracks would be laid, even on top of the pavement if lack of time allowed of no better construction. The people celebrated when the first three-cent car run across the Superior Viaduct one Saturday evening. On a following morning they opened eyes and mouths in astonishment, and then burst out into a merry laugh. There was a railroad track lying in Superior Avenue and at equal distances stood barrels filled with sand.

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In these barrels stuck the posts for the trolley line. It was certainly a unique war expedient, but some sober-minded property owners could not see its merits and secured an injunction. The mushroom railroad was removed.

Nevertheless, the time came when Mayor Johnson and his City Solicitor surmounted every obstacle. Injunctions were dissolved, new streets secured for the three-cent lines, which began to spread through the main parts of the city. In the winter of 1905 things were looking rather dismal and Mayor Johnson, through his Council, made overtures to the "Concon" for a settlement of the vexed street railway question. The company did not even display the courtesy of answering the Council's letter.

To remove some of the difficulties, the Mayor organized the Municipal Traction Company which took over all the rights and the property of the Forest City Railway Company to build and operate the three-cent lines under a lease. In July, 1906, the City

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Council was officially informed that the new company was doing business and that its books were open for inspection at any time. Mr. Johnson now appealed to the citizens of Cleveland for pecuniary assistance. So far only a few men of means had been asked to assist the new railroad. Next the citizens in general were invited, because it was to be their road, the road of the poor man, the widow and the orphan.

In order to facilitate matters a bank was established by the Mayor. The people responded to the call, several thousands strong. They bought shares, having been guaranteed six per cent dividends. From that time on the Municipal Traction Company became a rival which even the proud "Concon" began to fear. The patronage of the three-cent lines cut big holes in the "Concon" pocket. At first some people were ashamed to ride on a three-cent car, and even poor, deluded working girls shunned them as if their use would ruin their social standing. But these little human weaknesses could not and did

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not last long. Soon the cry for more cars arose, while those of the five-cent lines, running parallel with the other roads, remained more or less empty. The low-fare idea had conquered the pride of poor and rich.

Once in a while one of the many "Concon" lawsuits would be tried and decided in favor of Johnson. The people, however, no longer paid attention to them. Their minds were turned to the more practical result of cheap fare. It began to look as if Mayor Johnson would swallow slowly but surely the "Concon," Horace, and John, and their big lawyers. The three-cent slogan had proven very useful during campaign times and had to serve on a few more occasions.

In 1901 Mr. Johnson had assured the people that low fare was coming, in 1903 he repeated his assurance, in 1905 he was still at it, and in 1907 the people got a glimpse of the Promised Land. The impatient among the citizens had been sneering, not comprehending in their ignorance the immense fight that was raging around them almost day and

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night. Mayor Johnson's friends were living in astonishment and wonderment during those times. It must be repeated that the "Concon" people were terrible foes, trained in financial and legal battles, strong and healthy like Johnson himself, and rich in money. The Mayor and his little David gave and took when the Goliaths made their onslaughts, a dozen against two and with the city's political machinery back of the latter. Mayor Johnson used sometimes to accuse the courts of partiality, but after all, their decisions went against him only when he himself had taken an illegal standpoint. Of course, as long as the judges have the power of undoing laws, there will always be trouble. Judges ought to be the executors of the laws, not their interpreters. Mayor Johnson was more than once in danger of contempt, for he would rebel against a law which was not a law.

Wise, but at the same time cynical men assure us that laws were not made for the guidance of the people, but for the amuse-

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ment of the lawyers and for their benefit. They also say that nobody could tell what a law meant by looking at it, and that a judge not long ago rendered a decision, declaring that the payment of taxes was a voluntary act on the part of the taxpayers. No wonder that Tom L. Johnson and some others felt sometimes like anarchists.

The Mayor, however, had no time to squabble with learned jurists and philosophers in the year 1907. He was now engaged in perfecting his Municipal Traction Company and in extending his three-cent lines in various directions. He felt by this time that he had won his battle and that the day would come when the "Concon" could no longer withstand the competition with her franchises running out, one after another. If his struggles had been desperate the situation of the "Concon" was becoming so. The company had spent great sums of money in this warfare. Its debts became pressing, the payment of dividends had been suspended for some years, bonds would be due in a short

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time, and in the face of all this the income of the road was daily diminishing.

Some of the directors of the company, who saw their large holdings dwindle to nothing, demanded a settlement. Mr. Horace Andrews, who had declined an offer of 85 cents on the dollar for the stock of the company, refused to accept less. He wanted 105 in those days of declining values. Mayor Johnson, who began to develop a dangerous eagerness to get the railway into his possession, and who had made the above-named offer, laughed at him. Yet he was willing to pay a fair price, to enter into negotiations, but without a truce. The war of extermination was to go on. Pitiless, heartless, and even cruel, this war between a community and a corporation was to be carried on to the end. The people had spoken at the different elections. They trusted in their champion and hated the "Concon" like a rattlesnake. It had never shown any willingness to be a people's road. It had always been the cold, stern exponent of the heartless money power, that

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had been attacked all over the land for the last ten years by a new set of men, whose voices were beginning to be heard.

The business interests clamored for peace, the workingmen wanted war and cheap car fare. Peter Witt and some members of the Council advocated an uncompromising attitude toward the company. They would have liked to see it bleed to death for the welfare of the people.

"Give it its own medicine," Peter used to say. "The snake will not be dead unless you crush its head. As long as there is life in it, it will coil itself around your legs and you won't even be able to walk. Kill the damned beast."

Indeed, hatred of the "Concon" was great among the people. There were moments when Mr. Andrews felt the sting keenly, but he was not a man to yield. Concessions must be wrung from him, and came painfully, like drops from a man sweating blood. Mayor Johnson's hatred was perhaps not less deep than that of his friend Peter, but he never

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possessed the latter's energetic radicalism. He had not the single purpose of mind that agitated Peter. Mr. Johnson had to bear the responsibility of a public official; he was anxious for an adjustment, and was already looking toward the establishment of a great municipal lighting plant, which meant another fight with a wily corporation. Furthermore, it was political wisdom to remove the street railway question before another election. The people had so far rallied around his banner, but signs of fatigue were becoming visible.

Thus, from both sides sprang a willingness to arbitrate the vexed question. Mr. Andrews hoped for a franchise under a reduced fare, and even made trials under different rates, which were, however, not satisfactory to the people. They said that these trials were nothing more than malapert manœuvres to deceive them. Mr. Andrews himself was deceived, for nothing was further from the mind of Mayor Johnson than to grant him an old-fashioned franchise. A settle-

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ment was to bring municipal ownership under the guise of a holding company, with Mr. Johnson as the leading spirit. Had he not preached it since his return to Cleveland in 1901? He was not the man to present to his enemy the fruit of a victory gained after long and almost superhuman warfare. He was an honest believer in municipal ownership, and had proven its success through the garbage disposal plant of the city. Neither the man of prejudice nor the one who sees from the beginning nothing but difficulties and unsurmountable obstacles is the conqueror of the world. Cheerful and optimistic minds are the believers in new ideas and new things.

The beginning of the negotiations between the city and the "Concon" marked a new epoch in the street railway war. It was toward the close of the year 1908 that a number of conferences and tentative meetings took place between the Mayor, Mr. Andrews and their assistants. The difference of opinion, however, was too great to be eliminated by

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talks behind closed doors, or even in informal public meetings. It became evident that a third party was needed to stand between the Mayor and Mr. Andrews, as these two men hated each other so thoroughly that their native politeness was constantly in danger of disintegration. A man was found in the person of F. H. Goff, lawyer and financier, and withal a clever and pleasant gentleman. He was ostentatiously the representative of the people, but stood closer to the railway interests than to the low fare advocates. It was said at the time that he represented in reality the brokers in New York, who began to fear for their Cleveland street railway bonds. It was also hinted at that the same power forced the unremitting Mr. Andrews to yield to negotiations.

The sessions, held almost daily, lasted for three months. An immense amount of detail was gone into to fix the value of the street railway property. Mr. Johnson displayed a marvellous knowledge of the business, and the people felt that the company would not

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be able to pull the wool over his eyes. There were innumerable clashes between the contesting parties. The people of Cleveland began to learn something about the watered stock of a street railway corporation, about their method of appraisement, and the valuation of expiring franchises. Contractors' risks and profits were claimed as values by the railway officials. The banks and the lawyers came in for an appraisal, and a goodly sum was demanded for them as an asset. The Lord and Mr. Andrews knew that they had a large amount of the railroad's money in their pockets for which the road wanted to be reimbursed. Mr. Goff, who himself declared that he knew nothing of the street railway business, was an apt scholar. In a few weeks he knew enough to side with the railroad against most of the contentions of the Mayor.

Of course he was a business man who thoroughly understood the demands of the large money institutions and their conservatism. It was in the interest of the bond and

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stock holders to get as much as possible for the road, low fare or high fare. The higher the fare, he declared, the easier it would be to float the bonds in the money market. Against this argument not even Mayor Johnson dared to protest. But, after all, Mr. Goff tried to be fair. He scolded Mr. Andrews more than once when that gentleman stuck too closely to his great business principle of getting as much as possible and even more.

Whenever there was a lull in quoting figures, Mr. Goff would make a little polite speech to the people who happened to be present in the council chamber where the meetings were held. He assured them that he had full confidence in the honest purposes of the Mayor and of Mr. Andrews, and that he himself tried to be fair with everybody. He even shook hands with Peter Witt, the *enfant terrible* of the sessions. Peter, too, would offer a little speech once in a while, just to tell the railway officials to their faces that they were robbers, cut-throats, and scoun-

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drels of the purest water. Mr. Johnson, as chairman of the meetings, would call Peter to order, and Peter became silent after he had relieved his oppressed heart.

A sad but yet entertaining part of the proceedings was the cross-examination of the experts called by both sides. These poor men of special knowledge could never agree on anything. They were living examples of the ignorance of mankind, of the unreliability of scientific research and of the diversity of opinion on any given subject. The only thing the people could learn from them was not to believe them. But in spite of all, the railway company arrived at a valuation of thirty million dollars. Even the fair Mr. Goff found this to be a moderate figure. On the other hand, Mr. Johnson and his side could not get their figures higher up than about eighteen millions, and Peter claimed that the Mayor had overshot his estimate by at least six million dollars.

The result was truly disappointing, after all the figuring and talking that had been done

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for three months. Mr. Goff lost his temper, and thundered. He was too polite to curse, even if he had felt like it, although cursing would have been justified. The negotiations came to a standstill for some days, yet they had lasted too long to be broken off altogether. It was finally resolved to adjust the existing differences, and a number of committees were appointed to do the equalizing. Thus the valuation was put at twenty-three million dollars, and Mr. Andrews, who had the year before refused to accept $85 a share, had to accept $55. Now, nothing more remained but to draw up the necessary legal documents to make a binding contract between the "Concon" and the Municipal Traction Company, that was to run all the railway lines in the city in the name of her citizens.

It was a glorious victory for Mr. Johnson, at least on the surface. Peter Witt had his misgivings and went into mourning. Some of the councilmen shared his sadness, among them a Dr. F. W. Walz. The latter told the

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Mayor in some stormy interviews that he had paid too much for the "Concon" property and could not make a success of the enterprise at a three-cent rate of fare. Mr. Johnson was willing to risk anything in order to get possession of the road. There it was, within his reach. He would overcome the difficulties when it was time to meet them, as he had done before on former occasions. He was ready to trust his luck. The railway officials had been forced to yield through circumstances. There was a dark look in their eyes, and a deep plot in their hearts. The newspapers demanded in the name of the people a settlement at the terms arrived at. The whole city was in a happy turmoil over the end of the Seven Years' War.

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X

A PYRRHIC VICTORY

A REMARKABLE event took place on the evening of April 27, 1908, in the Chamber of Commerce building. It was the public exchange of the documents which gave the whole street railway system of Cleveland into the hands of Mayor Tom L. Johnson, and secured for the "Concon" a mortgage on the property.

On the platform of the assembly hall sat the generals of the street railway war, before them an audience of interested citizens. Speeches were made and applauded, speeches of peace and good will unto mankind. Mayor Johnson, radiant with happiness, strong and well-looking, saw the fulfilment of his ambition, a straight, three-cent fare. Mr. Horace Andrews hoped for success, Newton D. Baker offered a sigh of relief and a

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THE MIDNIGHT ARMY

Cartoon which appeared at the time of Johnson's fight for 3-cent fares

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eulogy for his master. Peter Witt, a modern Cassandra, was also prepared to have his say. This was a speech that was never made, for Mr. Johnson suppressed his friend for once with success. Peter had a few wretched minutes in the midst of general happiness.

The "Concon" as lessor took the name of The Cleveland Railway Company and under this name all the stock was to be issued. It also received the stock of the Forest City Railway Company, which was in time to disappear from the earth. The Municipal Traction Company was to run the road and, in case of failure, to return it to the lessor. A so-called "gentlemen's agreement" was entered into by which, in event of calamity, the property of the Forest City Railway Company was to be restored to the company. This agreement was regarded as a side issue, though Mayor Johnson considered it of much weight. The lawyers doubted its legal force.

Mayor Johnson, after all, was confident of success and impatient of any criticism. He

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had indeed accomplished a marvel. Without the expense of a single dollar he had acquired possession of a great street railway system. His business genius, his official position, and the people had been his assets. Yes, the people enabled him to win his great victory, and to the people should the road belong. It was to be run in their interest, run better than ever before, and at a three-cent fare. To celebrate this great event the next day, April 28, was declared Municipal Day, during which everyone would be allowed the free use of the street railway, and it should be thus on the 28th of April in all the years to come.

After the ceremonies at the hall of the Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor and his entourage, later on known as the Kitchen Cabinet, went away to celebrate, which was human. Envious people claimed that a hilarious time was had that night, but even if so, the Katzenjammer too belonged to the victors.

The next day was the day of the people, especially of the children, who took joy rides

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as long as they were allowed. Again, the next day business began—earnest, pitiless business. Mayor Johnson organized his company by rewarding his young friends and assistants with offices. As they were nearly all lawyers they were not possessed of street railway knowledge. The president, A. B. du Pont, and Mr. Johnson as treasurer, were the only experts in the business. The Mayor in those days almost deserted the City Hall. He spent many hours in the offices of the old "Concon," where Horace Andrews and his friend John Stanley had planned their warfare against the Mayor. In fact, he ate and even slept there, so busy a man was he. Time was too precious to be lost, and the work too plentiful to be neglected in any form or manner. It was there that the Kitchen Cabinet became accustomed to coming together "to work their jaws" in the double sense of the phrase.

Within two weeks troubles of a serious nature began, and it has always been claimed that John Stanley was at the bottom of it.

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Two unions of street railway men were in existence at the time Tom Johnson undertook the management of the road. The "Concon" men demanded the observation of their contract with their old company, refusing to recognize the employés of the "three-cent lines." Mr. Johnson, on his part, refused to make a one-sided settlement. The leader of the "Concon" men ignored his brethren of the other road. The debates were bitter, and the result a disagreement, and a strike. One fine morning in the beautiful month of May, the people on the lines on which a 5-cent fare had been charged were asked to walk. The strike proved very unpopular and was speedily suppressed by Mr. Johnson, who developed the genius of a general in handling the situation. He enjoyed the advantage of being, not only manager of the street railway system but also Mayor of Cleveland.

The fine Italian hand of the *Deus ex machina* came now into play. A few weeks before the events just related the Legislature

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of Ohio had passed a referendum law in connection with street railway franchises. The Mayor had advocated the law, which bore the name of Senator Schmidt, one of his best friends. John Stanley and his "Concon" men took advantage of the new law. Petitions were circulated, and soon bore the necessary number of signatures for a referendum election to approve or reject the railway settlement.

Now, the incredible happened. Mayor Johnson, for almost twenty years an ardent preacher of the initiative and referendum, fought the petitions instead of welcoming them and ordering through his Council a popular and speedy election. The citizens of Cleveland were painfully surprised, the enemies of the Mayor jubilant. The friends of the latter tried to excuse him on the ground that his adversaries were "playing a mean trick" upon him, but he, himself, resorted to all kinds of expedients to invalidate the petitions and prevent a referendum. Why that fear of an election? The people were with

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him, they had trusted him for many years, and were ready to trust him in this case. The old Johnson nature that liked a straight course and went a crooked way loomed up. He lost his fight, and the referendum election was set for October 22, 1908. He also lost the confidence of many of the people.

In another month or so some of his best friends had become his opponents. His popularity was in jeopardy. Once in possession of the railway property, he began to see that under the losses caused by the strike, and under the curtailed income due to business depression, he could not make both ends meet. A plan to reduce expenses was inaugurated. The beginning was made by discontinuing car lines long in existence and along which streets and business had developed. A great cry went up from the injured people. Delegation after delegation visited the City Hall to demand relief from the Mayor against Tom L. Johnson, the street railway manager.

Once more the Mayor failed to do his duty

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by the people, and to keep his promises of the old campaigns, that under a three-cent fare the service would be still better. The clamoring delegations found a haughty man, defiant and impatient. Railway operating expenses must be reduced. The people would have been willing to pay the higher rate of fare until their road was in better financial condition. They knew that the strike had been costly and that times were bad. The self-announced "man of the people" would not take them into his confidence. He was not willing to lay before them the true state of affairs. Instead he continued reducing the service on the lines until half the city was in an uproar.

"It is but natural," he explained, "that we have some people against us, for we are now running the road. The majority is with us; they are satisfied."

It was also natural that his old enemies should take advantage of the situation and of his mistakes. During the summer months the interests bestirred themselves and formed

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a strong combination for an energetic campaign against the railway franchise. It was not always a fair fight. It was not even a fight in which the end justified the means, for the leaders declared that defeat of the franchise meant a three-cent fare, in which that body had never believed. But it was a fight in which much money and much venom were spent.

The Mayor had his tents out and was speaking nightly, together with Newton D. Baker, his Directors and Peter Witt. His was from the beginning a double contest, for a county election was to be held in November. The former enthusiasm of the people was no longer visible at these tent meetings, though there were throngs of men and women present. The tents of the enemy were also filled and men who had never before spoken in public mounted the rostrum to voice their sentiments.

Under these conditions the referendum election day arrived; 75,893 citizens voted and the Goff–Johnson pact was undone by

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605 votes. The rejoicing of the victors knew no bounds. True, the margin in their favor was small, but it accomplished the purpose sought.

Mayor Johnson was crushed at the time. He had held the prize of his long endeavors in his hand and lost it. For some months he had been declining in health, his wife was ill in another city, his daughter had passed through a sad experience, and the outlook for the next election was gloomy. By an almost superhuman effort he managed to appear in public as the old Tom L. Who knows what this sick and defeated man suffered in the silence of his home, which was no home at that time? But time, business and fight went on and demanded their man. The enemies, encouraged by their success, kept up their organisation to execute their *coup de grace.* Their victim arose like a wounded lion, full of fight.

Matters in the City Hall went their placid way, but not those in the office of the Municipal Traction Company. The Central Trust

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Company of New York, holder of the "Concon" bonds, asked for the appointment of a receiver, and on November 12, Judge Tayler of the United States Circuit Court appointed two men to conduct the affairs of the company, which had been declared bankrupt by the complaining bondholders. An examination of the books revealed a sad state of affairs. There were big and little debts and deficits in the different funds; yea, not even the dinner bills of the Kitchen Cabinet had been paid. The powerful Mayor of Cleveland, the conqueror of the "Concon Monster" found himself in a position where he had to explain a restaurant debt left standing. Still worse, it was discovered that he and Mr. du Pont had formed a private company for the manufacture of fare boxes and for it had used $35,000 of the street railway company's money. The receivers, who were close to the old "Concon" officials, did not even honor the firm with an order, and the fare boxes were thrown into the scrap heap. Yet, Mr. Johnson had spent many a day in

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inventing and supervising their construction, and meant that they should prove of much value to the Municipal Traction Company. His enemies accused him of having committed an unlawful act. They reproached him also with having given his son a position at the expense of the public.

Traction affairs progressed from bad to worse. The Mayor was obliged to close his bank, which was founded as an auxiliary to his street railway. The depositors received their money, every cent of it, but the stockholders suffered a severe loss. They were almost without exception his friends and admirers. This was too much for Mr. Johnson. Therefore appeared, one day, in a Cleveland paper, a front page article in which the Mayor announced that he had suffered great losses in his private business, which he had neglected in serving the public. Consequently he would be constrained to sell his home in Euclid Avenue, to do away with his automobiles and his servants, and to lead the simple life, as he had become a poor man.

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His sycophants shed tears, and spoke of buying him a new automobile. His friends were amazed and in turn indignant, puzzled and sad. There was no dignity in a misfortune heralded through a newspaper.

Tom L. Johnson had become hysterical. He was physically a sick man and destiny spared him not with reprisals. He had lost his self-control and in his weakness revealed his innermost characteristics. The same weakness exposed later on a great tenderness for his family, a tenderness that was most honorable and becoming. To the initiated the failure of his bank was not a surprise, for they knew that the other banking institutions of Cleveland had harassed it from the beginning and would not lend it any assistance in time of need.

Under the receivership the railway company charged a five- and three-cent fare according to the nature of the several franchises under which they operated. Judge Tayler looked at the situation from the standpoint of its wants and announced it his duty to

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protect the interests of the investors. He listened neither to the demands of Horace Andrews nor to those of Mayor Johnson. Both wanted the receivership removed, and to that end new negotiations were begun, which lasted till the middle of March, 1909. By direction of Judge Tayler himself, the Mayor, Mr. Andrews, City Solicitor Baker, and the eminent jurist, John G. White, became members of a new street railway commission. Their deliberations were without result. During that time, however, the so-called Tayler plan was outlined, the main features of which were to limit the dividends to six per cent, to give the city the right to own the Street Railway at a certain time after the Legislature had made municipal ownership a possibility, and to give good service at the lowest possible rate of fare or a sliding scale. In the course of the negotiations Mr. Andrews had been obstinate as always and Mayor Johnson had taken new courage. He tried anew to become master of the situation. To that end he induced the

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City Council to pass the Schmidt franchises, which were to cover a number of expiring grants and to secure a new three-cent road. In the meantime, City Solicitor Baker prepared a new ordinance in accordance with the Tayler plan, and again public meetings were held, covering two months. Once more Mr. Johnson asked for a holding company, but Mr. Andrews absolutely refused to entertain any such proposition. At this time Prof. Bemis appraised the value of the street railway property at $5,750,000, instead of twelve million dollars as before. There was to be no water on the stock value and no payment for expiring franchises. Horace Andrews withdrew from the deliberations and Mayor Johnson granted Mr. Herman Schmidt his first franchise in June, followed by a dozen extension grants. Mr. Andrews answered by declaring that his company was willing to accept any ordinance which Judge Tayler might present.

The people, who could not understand

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Mayor Johnson's tenacity of purpose, and who had become tired of the street railway warfare, thought that he did not know when he was defeated. The newspapers demanded a Tayler ordinance, and the Chamber of Commerce became aroused. A referendum election on the Schmidt franchise was demanded and was set for August 3, 1909. The Chamber created a committee of one hundred citizens to direct a campaign against the Mayor and his ordinances. The Hundred did their work thoroughly, with means in abundance. Great tent meetings were held on hot summer evenings; debates took place, and leaflets and pamphlets were distributed. The truth was not always regarded as essential in some of the statements of the Hundred, and Mayor Johnson dealt in rosy figures of the future, in which art he certainly was a past master. But there was no hope of success for him. The noise in the tent-meetings was made by his immediate followers. The people at large came to listen, not

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to applaud. On August 3, the Schmidt ordinances were defeated by a plurality of 3,773 votes.

With the people against him the Mayor had lost his last chance to regain the much coveted street railways of Cleveland. He, too, was now ready to accept a Tayler ordinance. He was obliged to regain lost ground, for he was up for re-election. His Council opened peace negotiations, but now the old "Concon" spirit showed itself again. The ghost was playing politics, for it did not want the franchise question settled before the election. It knew that Judge Tayler was favorable to three-cent fare, and feared that Mr. Johnson would profit by a Tayler ordinance. Thus it delayed the new meetings until it was too late to bring them to a close before the fall election. On the 18th of October Judge Tayler began work upon his ordinance and two weeks later Mayor Johnson was defeated. Two days afterwards he appeared again in the United States Circuit Court room to oppose his old enemy, the "Concon."

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His strength was gone, while on the other side of the table sat Horace Andrews in the glory of vigorous manhood. Weeks of torture could not down the great will power of Mr. Johnson, though more than once he could be seen in a state of drowsiness. Yet, he would shake off the miserable feeling and reason and plead with the judge with almost his old-time keenness. When the work of framing a new ordinance was finally finished, around Christmas time, neither he nor Mr. Andrews was satisfied with it, a fact which proved that the ordinance was a fair piece of legislation under the circumstances. It provided a three-cent fare with one cent for a transfer and a sliding scale to four cents, or six tickets for a quarter as a maximum. It secured six per cent dividends and the right of the city to buy the road after a new valuation plus ten per cent. The stock must be sold at par. Judge Tayler valued the property at twenty-one million dollars, which Mr. Johnson declared too high and Mr. Andrews asserted was too low. It was a repetition

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of the old contentions. Mr. Johnson made it known publicly that he would not be bound to vote for the ordinance at the referendum election, which was set for February, 1910. The presumption is that he did not vote for it, but the people sanctioned the labor of Judge Tayler by a large majority. They had a high opinion of the jurist, which was well founded.

Mr. Johnson at last found time to look after his seriously impaired health, and left for New York to place himself under the care of a specialist.

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XI

CONCLUSION

THE life of Tom L. Johnson was a series of battles, lasting from childhood to the day of his death. He fought the grim harvester as he had fought poverty, political enemies and captains of industry. His great will power knew no surrender, his sunny nature never forsook him. At no time during his long sickness, which had been diagnosed as a cirrhosis of the liver, did he not hope for ultimate recovery. While too weak to move during a sinking spell, he thought of jokes to repeat to his friends as soon as he should be strong enough to speak and laugh again. City Solicitor Baker, who had alone survived the defeat in November, 1909, had become his closest friend and confidant. To him he intrusted his worldly affairs. With him he spoke about the news of the day. There are

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few men who can feel the pulsation of life as Mr. Johnson did; few who would cling to life as he clung to it. He believed in its realities. He believed in the work of the world and was not prone to leave it.

To-day not even his enemies fail to do him justice, which speaks well for human nature. Above all men he must be judged by his deeds, for he was a man of action. He was also a product of our modern business life, which is not always honest. The struggle in his youth had been severe, but kind nature gave him the joy of living, that he might not feel too deeply the bitterness of a lost childhood. Too early had he become aware of the duplicity of men in business enterprises. His quick intellect furnished him with the weapons with which to beat them at their own game. His master-mind dominated over them, his great power of endurance outdid them, his iron will lamed their resistance. Yet none of his great enterprises was wholly successful. He made a few millions and stopped to enter into political life. Here his

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success was still less marked. He was qualified to become a famous president for his country, but ended as a defeated mayor. He had conquered a great street railway monopoly, held the fruit of his victory in his hand, and dropped it. His personal magnetism won him the friendship of his fellow citizens, yet they turned against him at the end. There was no single obstacle that he did not and could not overcome, yet he died as a private citizen in an apartment house suite.

The case is astonishing. He was neither a child of fortune nor one of misfortune. Whatever his success it was attained by hard work and close application. It was the impatience to do things that in his younger years led him to different enterprises. He did not then concentrate his efforts, and was sometimes carried away by a spirit of adventure. His was too great an intellect to not see the emptiness of money making; and to his inquisitive mind it was but natural that the great economic questions should prove attractive. A world of mental specu-

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lations opened before him. The young man had never had any time to study, but he was always susceptible to new things. Thus, from a business man he became a politician. He entered the arena with a high purpose, and as a man who wanted practical results, for he never was a dreamer. Solitude he abhorred and always liked having people around him. In politics he was ahead of his time, and having espoused the cause of the people, he antagonized the money interests. But, here too, his course was too swift, too radical for a slow but steady progress. Not being a diplomat, he offended where he should have conciliated antagonistic views. This was not his way of doing things. A man of great courage, he had neither the patience nor the inclination to parley with a foe. Instead he would send him forthwith a declaration of war. He was not to be measured by a pigmy standard.

There can be no question that his ultimate defeat was the result of his inherent qualities. That which his enemies could never

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have achieved, he brought about himself, and it was a rather pitiful spectacle to see the struggle of this strong man, already partially wasted by disease, to regain his lost ground. Almost sick unto death, he strove to keep his party together, and announced that he would again come forth as a candidate for the office of Mayor of Cleveland. He had the sympathy of the citizens, for they admired his pluck. They began to perceive that there was greatness in this much maligned man and that his faults could be forgiven. After all he had meant well with the people and had been fighting their battles in his own way. It was but natural that he should fail in this and, even more natural, that he should fall short of his greater aims, for, no matter how little we demand of destiny it always gives us less.

Yet, no human life is without some results. Tom L. Johnson left a legacy to his fellowmen and to his country. As a boy he was a dutiful son, cheerfully carrying the burden of the misfortune which had befallen his

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parents. He was ever ready to help and assist them and never failed to visit often his old mother in later years, though he was obliged to travel hundreds of miles to do so. He brought life and sunshine to his friends and even to his enemies, for he could forget business and politics in a social hour. His hatred like his love was strong, but he hated very few men. His naturally democratic ways won him many admirers, and made him an exception among his class. One could feel at home with him and enjoy his bright and lively conversation. He was never dull and seemed to have seven lives. Men and their doings were his chief topics. Having come in contact with most of the luminaries of his time, his word pictures of them were interesting and valuable.

His personality entered strongly into every walk of his life. As a business man he constantly strove for improvements and for new things. The inventor was always in the foreground, even offering an incentive to his partners. There is no doubt that he

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exercised a great influence over his surroundings. He revolutionized the street railway business in Cleveland and set an example which will be followed by other cities. The struggle against the street railway monopolies is already on in some of them. The great value of his lesson may easily be overlooked or forgotten, but it means immense savings for the poorer people, and is of no less importance than the values which are to be redeemed by a tariff revision, or by the breaking up of obnoxious trusts. The well-to-do are too apt to forget that not everybody is able to contribute a brick towards the erection of the palaces of the rich without feeling its weight. Palaces are not in harmony with their surroundings in a land of hovels; even the Church has begun to see the iniquity and is preaching humanity.

Mr. Johnson preached the same sermon in the halls of Congress and as Mayor of Cleveland. He did more. He tried to turn his sermons into deeds whenever the powers of

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antagonism could be conquered. A man's good intentions and his efforts for their realization will be rewarded in Heaven, if not here below. Mr. Johnson's propagation of municipal ownership sprung not from the wish to strengthen his political machine but from a conviction that it would be helpful to the people. He has done much in this respect and saw further than the average politician who hangs to the apron strings of his party.

The lesson of his city administration had been both forceful and useful. The citizens of Cleveland have become accustomed to honesty in their officials and would have no patience with grafters. His great activity in the advancement of the city during the last nine years had the result that his successor emulated his example. To stand still became simply impossible. The education of the people in municipal, state, and even national affairs during Mr. Johnson's tenure of office was wonderful. His constant strife, his campaigns, and his new ideas found an

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interested public even in socialistic circles. His tent meetings were schools in national economics and municipal self-government. People without the inclination to read even the newspapers went to these meetings to learn their lesson.

He had been elected Mayor of Cleveland at a time when the city began to emerge from her childhood, and it was lucky for her that she had his strong and sure guidance. He was not a man to waver for any length of time, and knew always what he wanted. The citizens of Cleveland soon became impressed with this fact and often wondered how Mayor Johnson would decide this or that vexed question, and decide he did without hesitation.

It is pertinent to ask how much more the city would have gained from his administration if there had been no street railway controversy. It is regrettable that the "Con-con" octopus is still alive, while Mayor Johnson is no longer. Many think that it killed him, not only politically but physically.

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It killed him politically just as the temperance question killed Bryan of Nebraska and Folk of Missouri. The statesmen who are committed to one idea have always been doomed to extinction.

Tom L. Johnson's administration of the affairs of the City of Cleveland exercised its influence over many other cities in the country. Their emissaries came to Cleveland to study the Johnson methods, which were frequently quite original, and nearly always in advance of those in use in other places. The fame of the Cooley Farm reached across the Atlantic. Mr. Johnson preached home rule and proved its wisdom on several occasions. Thus, this much hated and much admired man was one of the first to preach the new gospel of The City.

As a politician Mr. Johnson was a Democrat who could not be kept within strict party lines. He always demanded the right to follow his own judgment in matters concerning questions of the day. At no time would he hesitate to flay a Democrat whom he thought

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a traitor to the cause of the people. His political methods were described as sensational but they never failed to arouse attention, and were therefore apt to awaken the public conscience. Most of the "Johnsonisms" and Johnson fads of ten years ago are to-day advocated by Republicans and Democrats alike. They have become recognized planks in the party platforms. Who would deny that we are advancing?

Looking back upon his activities as a public man it becomes apparent that, when everything is said, they were in the interest of the people. Like all of us, he committed errors of judgment, but they were very rare. His methods died with him, his acts and his teachings will live on as a wholesome leaven in the fomentation of our public advancement. He thoroughly believed in this advancement and fought for it with his great intellect and his wonderful energy.

Not always did he draw the last consequences of his opinions. He would even relegate them to the rear when political

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sagacity or business expediency demanded it. To control himself was not an easy thing for this self-willed man, when short-sighted pigmies differed from him. Yet, he was not ultra-radical, only a few years ahead of his time, which is also our time.

The wisdom of the world was in him. Early in life he understood that the material things are of paramount importance, that a full stomach makes a contented mind, and gives peace to the nations of the earth. He had accumulated his share of the general wealth and was willing to give "the other fellow" a chance. It was at this point that his business friends began to doubt his sincerity. They could not comprehend him and henceforth considered him their enemy.

Those who watched him closely during the last ten years of his life, during which his greatest public work was done, learned to know that there was nothing wrong with his intentions. If he preached one thing and did another the cause must be sought in his inclination to mental and moral sophistry.

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As stated, he had always favored the referendum and caused one of his legislative friends to present a bill making referendum elections a possibility. The bill was passed, yet Mr. Johnson was first to repudiate it and to fight the first referendum. The reason was not that he feared the outcome very much, not that he did no longer believe in the measure, but because the petitions for this election had been circulated by his opponents. He sought to nip their attack in the bud instead of allowing events to take their course. This was poor and unsound reasoning for a man of his calibre. The unworthiness of his action he tried to excuse on the ground of meanness of his enemies. This dangerous attitude of mind was ever present in him and prevented his rise to higher spheres and to real greatness. He could never be a hero, nor reach the high aims which filled his heart with the enthusiasm of becoming a benefactor to suffering mankind. Thus he carried the tragedy of his life in his bosom. In spite of lamentable

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hindrances, he accomplished more than many a luckier man in public life. The grievous in him was hidden by an abundance of good qualities, but it was there nevertheless.

On the other hand he was strong enough to jeopardize his political success for his ideals. It was refreshing to see this man announcing his theories, so to say, with a fanfare, well knowing that this procedure would result in his having a whole pack of hounds at his heels. He was superhuman in courage, intellect and far-sightedness, a giant in endurance, working-power and strength of will. He was not a Messiah but a Prophet, who announced the coming of a new and better time in the life of mankind. He saw the light of the future long before the general public dreamed of it. He made a glorious fight for the welfare of his fellowmen, dying upon the field of battle while victory was hovering in the air.

No one who came into personal contact with Tom L. Johnson was able to withstand his personal magnetism. It is this fact which

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makes a true judgment of him a task of great difficulty. Only in the course of time would the real man appear to an unbiassed mind. Even then the complexity of his nature offered many snares to the student of his character.

Taken all in all, he was one of the most remarkable men in the country, gifted and cursed, greatly admired, and greatly misunderstood. He accomplished much and failed in much. But he has not labored in vain. To-day his fellow citizens are beginning to comprehend him and within a short time they will feel his loss.

During the last year of his life he battled no longer with the world, but fought death. He longed to live, and summoned his great will-power and his good humor to hold in check the dire and wasting disease which was eating away his vitality. For a long time he had suffered in silence, neither his family nor his most intimate friends being aware of his affliction. It was only when his cheeks began to fade and his flesh to disappear that

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he acknowledged the impairment of his health. He struggled long and hard, banishing the thought of defeat as he had done so often in his political warfare, and in his fights against the money interests. Until the last he requested that the newspapers be read to him, even the often cruel articles about his condition. He received his friends as often as his physicians would allow, and City Solicitor Baker was always admitted to the sick chamber. With his assistance Mr. Johnson closed up his worldly affairs when he finally saw the handwriting on the wall.

It was during that last year that he again took up the teachings of his friend Henry George, with great fervency. The wish to do a great thing for his fellowmen was still burning in his breast. He undertook the before-mentioned trip to England to take part in a meeting of single-taxers, and said after his return that he was glad to have been present, even if the exertion had shortened his life. His great power of concentration was brought into play. He occupied

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himself with his pet theories, believing in their ultimate realization, and banished all thoughts of sickness.

In times of great pain Mr. Johnson was a reader. When incapacitated himself one or another of his friends read to him for hours. He liked to hear well-written, simple love stories with a happy ending, and took a lively interest in the destinies of the people in the book. On one occasion he asked a friend who was reading to him Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island," to suspend for a time, declaring the story to be too strong for his weakened condition.

The impetuosity of his active days had, of course, left him, and he had become very gentle, kind and considerate, and quite patient. Greatly, indeed, did he enjoy the presence of his little granddaughter, Margaret Evelyn Mariani. The society of his wife was not less welcome.

About the middle of March, 1911, he attended as a guest a lawyers' banquet, enjoying himself hugely. He always had had a

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liking for the fraternity and wished to study law after his last defeat, only being prevented therefrom by his sickness. Two days after this festivity he suffered from a sinking spell, from which he rallied partially. It was apparent, however, that the end was not far off. For several days he was unable to leave his bed. He revived, however, and insisted upon receiving his friends.

On the seventh of April his life was despaired of, and he himself had now given up all hope. At last this indomitable man had become tired and ready to sleep. His last days were not without pain.

"I want to die game, and meet death with a smile," he was reported to have said. And death came to him Monday evening, the tenth of April, after he had fallen into a state of coma during the morning hours.

The mourning of the citizens of Cleveland was deep and sincere. Everybody felt that death had claimed the best Mayor the city ever had, that a man uncommonly gifted had passed away. He had to some extent been

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